TIME, SPACE AND POWER IN LATER MEDIEVAL BRISTOL

PETER FLEMING

Electronically published by
BRISTOL RECORD SOCIETY
FEBRUARY 2023

The following mongraph is the advanced draft of a book written by Professor Peter Fleming of the University of the West of England. Ill health prevented him from publishing the book with his intended press. When it became clear that this would be the case, Professor Fleming posted his 2013 draft on the University of the West of England's electronic repository, where it still currently remains:
https://uwe-repository.worktribe.com/output/924983/time-space-and-power-in-later-medieval-bristol

Unfortunately, awareness of this important monograph was limited, particularly after Professor Fleming's ongoing health issues forced him to retire early. The Bristol Record Society thus suggested in 2022 that it publish the work as an electronic publication, as part of our 'Occassional Series', on The Internet Archive (archive.org).

The main body of the publication is identical to that posted on UWE's electronic repository. No corrections or additions have been made, so as to prevent any confusion between those who may wish to cite the current version and those who wish to cite, or have already cited, the UWE version. The only differences between the two works relate to the front cover and the current page. It was possible to insert this page without changing the listed pagination as it appears in the UWE version.

The Bristol Record Society would like to thank Professor Fleming, who was a member of the BRS Council for many years, for his support and assistance in publishing the current version of his book. At the same time, we thank him for his many years of service to the Bristol Record Society and, more generally, to the research and study of medieval Bristol. We also thank Peter's wife, Dr Ann Rippin, for her help in bringing this publication to fruition.

Dr Evan T. Jones. General Editor: Digitisation
Professor Jonathan Barry, General Editor
Professor Roger Leech, General Editor
Bristol Record Society

A full list of the Bristol Record Society print publications and electronic publications can be found on its website: http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/bristolrecordsociety/

Cover illustration: View of Bristol: Robert Ricart, The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar (by permission of Bristol Archives). This well-known image was intended originally to be Illustration 5 in the book. For a discussion of the view, see:
Peter Fleming (ed.), *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* (Bristol Record Society Publications, Vol. LXVII, Bristol, 2015), pp. 30-32.

© Bristol Record Society 2023

Contents

	Pages
List of abbreviations	1
List of Tables	3
List of Illustrations	4
Introduction	5
Section One: Time	23
Chapter 1: Foundation Myths	24
Chapter 2: The Uses of History	39
Chapter 3: Memory	61
Section Two: Space	88
Chapter 4: The World Beyond the Sea	89
Chapter 5: Britain and Ireland	114
Chapter 6: The Town and County	155
Section Three: Power	183
Chapter 7: Bristol and the Crown	184
Chapter 8: Bristol and the Berkeleys	224
Chapter 9: The Mayor's Realm	232
Conclusion	251
Appendix I	255
Appendix II	263
Appendix III	266
Bibliography	283

List of Abbreviations

BBHA	Bristol Branch of the Historical Association
BCL	Bristol Central Library
BGAS	Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, Record Series
BIHR	*Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*
BL	British Library
Bristol Charters, 1155-1373	*Bristol Charters, 1155-1373,* ed. N.D. Harding, Bristol Record Society, 1 (1930)
Bristol Charters, 1378-1499	*Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, ed. H.A. Cronne, Bristol Record Society, 11 (1946 for 1945)
BRO	Bristol Record Office
BRS	Bristol Record Society
Camden Soc	The Camden Society
CCR	*Calendar of Close Rolls*
CFR	*Calendar of Fine Rolls*
CIPM	*Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*
CMMBC	*Catalogue of the Medieval Muniments of Bristol Castle*
CPR	*Calendar of Patent Rolls*
CUHB	*The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, vol. 1, 600-1540,* ed. D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)
CUP	Cambridge University Press
EcHR	*Economic History Review*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
GA	Gloucestershire Archives
GRBB, Text	*The Great Red Book of Bristol*, ed. E.W.W. Veale, Parts 2-4, Bristol Record Society 4, 8, 16, 18 (1931-53)
GWBB	*The Great White Book of Bristol,* ed. E. Ralph, Bristol Record Society, 32 (1979)
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
HPHC	History of Parliament House of Commons
Lee, 'Political Communication'	James Lee, "Political Communication in Early Tudor England: The Bristol Elite, the Urban Community and the Crown, c.1471-c.1553" (unpublished University of the West of England, Bristol, Ph.D. thesis, 2006)
Leech, *Topography*	*The Topography of Medieval and Early Modern Bristol, part 1: Property Holdings in the Early Walled Town and Marsh Suburb North of the Avon*, ed. R.H. Leech, Bristol Record Society, 48 (1997)

Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*	C. Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance in Late Medieval English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350-1400* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011)
LRBB	*The Little Red Book of Bristol*, ed. F. B. Bickley, 2 vols. (Bristol: W. C. Hemmons, 1900)
NY	New York
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (on-line version, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004-13)
Overseas Trade, ed. Carus-Wilson	*The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages,* Bristol Record Society, 7 (1937)
OUP	Oxford University Press
PROME	*Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*
REED, Bristol	*Records of Early English Drama: Bristol*, ed. Mark C. Pilkinton (Toronto and London: Toronto University Press, 1997)
Ricart, *Kalendar*	*The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, by Robert Ricart, Town Clerk of Bristol 18 Edward IV,* ed. L. Toulmin-Smith, Camden Society, New Series, 5 (1872)
Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*	John Smyth, *The Berkeley Manuscripts: The Lives of the Berkeleys, Lords of the Honour, Castle and Manor of Berkeley, in the County of Gloucester, from 1066 to 1618; with a Description of the Hundred of Berkeley and of its Inhabitants,* ed. J. Maclean, 3 vols. (Bristol:Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1883-5)
TBGAS	*Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
TNA	The National Archives, Public Records Office
Topography	*William Worcestre: The Topography of Medieval Bristol,* ed. F. Neale, Bristol Record Society, 51 2000)
UP	University Press
UWE	University of the West of England, Bristol
Wadley, *Wills*	*Notes or Abstracts of the Wills Contained in the Volume Entitled the Great Orphan Book and Book of Wills, in the Council House at Bristol (1381-1605)*, ed. T. P. Wadley, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (Bristol, 1886)

List of Tables

I Home Ports of Vessels paying Customs at Bristol, 1390-1480

II Nationalities given in Bristol Alien Subsidy Returns, 1449 & 1453

III Wills referring to Locations outside Bristol, 1400-1500

IV Wills referring to Locations outside Bristol, 1400-1449

V Wills referring to Locations outside Bristol, 1450-1500

VI Bristol Staple Court Cases, 1489 – 1497 & 1509-1513

VII Admissions to the Bristol Staple, 1489-1497 & 1509-1513

VIII Bristol Debts. 1400-1500 from TNA C241 Certificates of Statute Merchant and Staple & TNA C131 Extents for Debts

IX Debts from CP40 Pleas laid in Bristol: Combined Totals for 1450–1510

X Bristol Apprentices registered 1532-1542

XI 1524 Lay Subsidy Returns, Bristol

List of Illustrations

Please refer to the Facebook Site for these illustrations: 'Time, Space and Power in Fifteenth-Century Bristol'

1. Brennius and Belinus, St John the Baptist Church and Gate, Broad Street.
2. The Coronation of Henry III: Robert Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* (by permission of the Bristol Record Office)
3. William II (Rufus): Robert Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* (by permission of the Bristol Record Office)
4. William the Conqueror: Robert Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, (by permission of the Bristol Record Office)
5. View of Bristol: Robert Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, (by permission of the Bristol Record Office)
6. Queen Elizabeth entering the City of Bristol (by permission of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery)
7. Bristol Castle, from James Millerd's Map of Bristol, 1673 (by permission of Bristol Central Library)
8. The Mayor-Making: Robert Ricart, *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* (by permission of the Bristol Record Office)
9. The Bakers' Charter, 1347 (by permission of the Bristol Record Office)
10. North Outer Porch of St Mary Redcliffe
11. The portals of the Capellas Imperfeitas in the Mosteiro da Batalha, Portugal

Introduction

Medieval Bristol

With a population of almost 10,000, Bristol was later medieval England's second or third biggest urban place, and the realm's second port after London. While not particularly large or wealthy in comparison with the great cities of northern Italy, Flanders or the Rhineland, it was a metropolis in the context of the British Isles. As a port, it was the hub of a trading network that began with England, Wales and Ireland and extended as far as the Iberian Peninsula and Iceland, and for medieval Europeans, it sat on the edge of the known world; as a strategic strongpoint it commanded routes from Ireland, Wales and the West Midlands to London and the South; as an industrial centre, it was a major participant in English textile production. By the eve of the fifteenth century Bristol had already enjoyed a position among England's leading towns and cities for several centuries. In fact, it had probably achieved this position within two centuries of its foundation.

Bristol appears to have originated as a late-Saxon (probably ninth to tenth century) burgh built on a promontory at the lowest secure bridging-point of the Avon: its site is reflected in its name, which means "the place by the bridge".[1] Bristol's situation, on the borders of the late-Saxon kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia, would have a significant influence on the town's later history. Before 1542 Bristol stood between two dioceses, Worcester north of the Avon and Bath and Wells to its south, the diocesan borders respecting those of the two kingdoms: its liminal position meant that it did not become a cathedral city until the creation of the Diocese of Bristol in 1542. The somewhat anomalous circumstance of one of England's largest and wealthiest urban places lacking a cathedral, and therefore also the status of a city, had a number of consequences, among them, probably, being the possession of a rather more secular political and cultural ambience. Whether or not later medieval Bristol was made more susceptible to the influence of heresy by the problems of control and communication it presented to episcopal administrations based many miles away, it does seem to be the case that the absence of a dean and chapter and the other attributes of a diocesan administrative headquarters, meant that neither was Bristol home to a concentration of clerical intellectuals who might have set the tone of its literary, artistic and performative cultures, as well, perhaps, as playing a major role in its local politics. As will be demonstrated, fifteenth-century Bristol was a considerable centre of cultural production and consumption, but this was overwhelmingly secular, and mainly vernacular. Of course, this is not to say that medieval Bristolians were necessarily any more impious, let alone 'anticlerical' than their contemporaries anywhere else in the kingdom, but their cultural milieu was different from that of the inhabitants of most other large towns or cities in later medieval England.

By the mid-eleventh century Bristol had a mint, indicating that it was a place of some consequence, and it was engaged in a regular trade with Ireland. By 1088 the Normans had built a castle, blocking the landward approach, and it was probably

[1] The following summary of Bristol's history to the end of the 15th century is based on Fleming, "Crown and Town in Later Medieval England: Bristol and National Politics, 1399 to 1486", in *Negotiating the Political in Northern European Urban Society, c.1400-c.1600*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Tempe, Arizona/Turnhout, Belgium: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies/Brepols, 2013), 141-162, at 143-9, and Mary D. Lobel and E. M. Carus-Wilson, *The Atlas of Historic Towns, Two: Bristol* (London and Baltimore: British Atlas of Historic Towns, 1975), 5-14.

around this time that the first circuit of town walls was built. Bristol's strategic position made it key first to Anglo-Norman expansion into South Wales from the later eleventh century onwards and then, from 1167, into Ireland.

The accession of Henry II in 1154 brought the rich vineyards of Gascony into the possession of the king of England, and Bristol was perfectly placed to capitalise on this new trading axis. The prosperity brought to the port by the importation of Gascon wine allowed it, in the 1240s, to make massive investments in urban expansion and in developing its harbour facilities. Marshland below the town was reclaimed, and a new outer circuit of town walls and a new bridge across the Avon were built. A new channel for the Frome was built across land held by St Augustine's Abbey, to form a large, deep-water harbour. This provided competition to the harbour on the south bank of the Avon, at Redcliffe, part of the manor of Bedminster, held by the Lords Berkeley of Berkeley Castle. By the mid-thirteenth century Redcliffe had developed into a major commercial centre. Naturally, the men of Redcliffe were reluctant to assist their neighbours to build their new harbour, and it took an order from Henry III himself to enforce their co-operation. Relations between Redcliffe and Bristol remained tense, and in 1305 violence erupted between them over the Berkeleys' claim to separate jurisdiction south of the Avon. A commission to try the case found for Bristol, and the liberties of the manor and hundred of Bedminster were taken into the king's hands.

Perhaps the most dramatic incident in Bristol's history before 1399 was the great insurrection of 1312 to 1316. While this must be seen in the immediate context of the baronial opposition to Edward II and his favourites, its roots lay in long-running grievances between the townspeople and the castle constable over the levying of Bristol's farm. This was paid annually to the Crown, which chose who would collect the sum. Before the mid-thirteenth century the collection of Bristol's farm had periodically been let to the mayor and burgesses, a situation that gave them considerable independence. After 1265, however, the collection of the farm usually rested with the constable, which enhanced his influence within the town.

Tensions between castle constable and the Bristol burgesses reached new heights in 1312. The castle constable, Bartholomew Badelsmere, had allegedly been interfering in civic appointments and had misappropriated the wool customs in collusion with a group of fourteen plutocrats; these dominated town life, and were bitterly resented by the majority of lesser burgesses. Open rebellion against Badelsmere, the plutocrats and, by extension, Lord Berkeley and the king, was led by members of the broader burgess elite who had felt excluded from the inner workings of civic power. At one point, the castle was besieged by the rebellious townspeople. The rebellion came to an end in 1316 following the threat of a siege by the earl of Pembroke. The rebels were punished with fines and outlawries, but there were no executions, an indication, probably, of the rebels' relative strength and Edward II's relative weakness. Ten years later the king was forced to flee before an invasion led by his wife, Isabella, and her lover, Edmund Mortimer. Edward's unpopular favourite, Hugh Despenser the elder, earl of Winchester, had been given custody of Bristol castle and town in 1325. Following Mortimer and Isabella's invasion, Winchester took refuge in the castle: he may have been there with Edward II, before the latter's flight to Wales. Isabella and her army reached Bristol prepared for a siege, but the castle garrison deserted Winchester, who was forced to surrender. He was given a peremptory trial, followed by the full rigours of a traitor's death, to the great delight of the mob.

In 1327 Isabella and Mortimer deposed and murdered Edward II. The deed was done at Berkeley Castle, and Lord Berkeley was a supporter of their short-lived regime.

Consequently, the Bedminster liberties confiscated after the 1305 commission were returned to him, but with the collapse of Mortimer and Isabella's regime in 1330 these were lost to him once again, and the following year Bristol received a charter confirming its jurisdiction over Redcliffe. The matter was still not settled however, and contention flared up again in 1342. The problem of transpontine jurisdiction was finally addressed with the charter of 1373 which created the county of Bristol, since care was taken that the southern boundary of this new entity encompassed the Berkeleys' territory at Redcliffe.

The county of Bristol was only the second of its kind in England: before 1373 only London had enjoyed the status of an urban county. The 1373 grant was made largely in response to Bristol's lavish support for Edward III's war efforts. Indeed, Bristol's fortunes were intimately connected to those of the nation as a whole during the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). The outbreak of war seriously disrupted England's long-standing wool-export trade to Flanders, and greatly encouraged domestic cloth-manufacturing. Before the 1330s Bristol had been prominent neither as an exporter of wool nor as a cloth-producer, but was now able to exploit the situation to become, by the middle of the fourteenth century, England's paramount cloth exporting port. While the coming of war had also disrupted the wine trade with Gascony, by the 1360s this had recovered much of its pre-war vitality, much to Bristol's commercial advantage. For Bristol the third quarter of the fourteenth century was a period of prosperity that would not be matched until its second 'golden age', over three hundred years later. As English military fortunes in France declined in the first half of the fifteenth century, so too did Bristol's commercial fortunes, and the final loss of Gascony in 1453 dealt the port a severe short-term blow. However, this was only temporary, and Bristol's recovery was evident in its economic performance in the final quarter of the century. That recovery lost momentum in the early part of the sixteenth century, but that lies beyond the scope of this work.

Why "Time", "Space" and "Power"?

The major tradition in the Anglophone historiography of medieval towns has been firmly located in economic and/or social history. This has tended to employ methodologies that impose analytical approaches stemming from modern concerns and the categories used for analysing modern society, such as "trade", "society", "popular religion", and so on. The employment of such anachronistic concepts is to some extent inevitable: on the one hand, medieval English towns did not generate their own analytical categories for reflexive study; and the questions that economic and social historians want answered are unlikely to be those that would have interested, or even been explicable to, medieval townspeople. This approach has achieved a great deal, but it is not the only means of understanding urban societies, in this or any other age.

Since the 1970s human geographers have found various concepts of "place" to be powerful tools for understanding a range of important issues discussed throughout the social sciences.[2] These include our relationship with our environment, our sense of self and being, the lines we draw between "us" and "them", "inside" and "outside", and even our very understanding of consciousness. While there is no universally-accepted

[2] Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (California UP, 1997), traces the history of the concept from the beginnings of western philosophy to French philosophers of the later 20th century, but does not consider human geographers, anthropologists, or historians. I am deeply grateful to Dr Ann Rippin for her help and advice with this section.

consensus as to what "place" might mean in such discourses, certain broad principles are widely accepted. "Place" differs from "space". The latter refers to a location defined by measurable, geometric dimensions that needs only co-ordinates to identify and describe it. A space can be utterly devoid of humans, or of any other form of life; it does not, of itself, have any particular cultural associations. These associations are the essence of "place". A place must exist in space, but it is created through the meanings people invest in a particular location. Thus, Henri Lefebvre wrote of the "production of space", and *l'espace* as spatialisation, as cultural processes, while Michel de Certeau insisted that place was created through human activity.[3] Cresswell cites a useful illustration of the distinction between space and place, with reference to Jonathan Raban's account of Captain Vancouver's 1792 exploratory voyage along the coast between present-day Seattle and Vancouver. Captain Vancouver noted that the indigenous peoples did not paddle their canoes in straight lines, but followed complicated routes, as though zig-zagging between imaginary points in what seemed to the Englishman to be a featureless sea. However, the Americans' mental map of the sea was made up of a series of invisible but significant points, the abodes of good spirits that had to be visited and placated, or bad spirits to be avoided. By contrast, the territory inland of the coast, which to the British was replete with features suggesting its potential for economic exploitation, was regarded by the locals as an undifferentiated mass that was best ignored, since their livelihoods, and the focus of their lives, was the sea and seashore. In Raban's words, "for Indians the water was a place".[4] For the British, it was just "space", a kind of vacuity, a distance to be crossed before a "place" could be reached. Conceivably, "place" could be any size, from the whole world (Apollo astronauts, looking at their home planet from its moon, undoubtedly regarded the Earth as a "place") to a single house, or even the corner of a room.[5] Most geographers have tended to discuss places that fall somewhere in between these poles, these most often being urban settlements.

The work of geographers such as Sarah Pink, Doreen Massey and Tim Ingold suggests some of the complexities of "place". For both Pink and Massey, places are constructed from the intermeshing of the animate and inanimate, meanings, histories, languages, and memories; they are fluid, but at the same time sufficiently coherent to be considered as real things, capable of both categorisation and of providing categories in taxonomic exercises.[6] Massey is particularly insistent that any consideration of place must address the dimension of time, as in reality the two concepts cannot exist apart from each other. For Massey, place can only ever be defined, or even imagined, within a temporal framework. Each and every place is produced through the meeting of individual trajectories through time, so that "place" can be talked about as an event. In Massey's formulation, place within "space-time" is a dynamic continuum of encounters

[3] H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. S. Rendall (Berkeley: California UP, 1984), 117.

[4] Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 8-9, citing Jonathan Raban, *Passage to Juneau* (1999), 103, 106. Cresswell's book is very useful as an overview of the concept for non-specialists.

[5] See, for example, the classic discussion by Martin Heidegger of a Black Forest farmhouse, in his *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), discussed in Casey, *Fate of Place*, Chapter 11; and Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), which explores the geography and the associations of memory and affect of the rooms and spaces within a single house.

[6] Sarah Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography* (London: Sage, 2009), 29-34; Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), particularly Chapter 11, "Slices through Space".

between agents whose myriad of interconnections, both actual and potential, ensure that the spatial is never diachronically static. Place is a process and an event – a spatio-temporal point – a nexus of human activity and signification constantly changing through time as the result of shifting social and material relations and practices. A similar interpretation was developed by Ingold, for whom place is a "zone of entanglement": places do not so much exist as independent entities but instead "occur along the lifepaths of beings", part of a "meshwork of paths", and "occur through intersections and proximities of pathways as they are entangled".[7] Events are constituted as varying intensities in a meshwork.

Thus, "Bristol", in any part of its history, is in part the product of the life experiences of its inhabitants: but only in part. This is for two reasons. Firstly, as Massey points out, the identity of a place is the product of both human and non-human activity. Included in her "non-human" category are not only other animals, but also vegetation, rocks and weather, each of which has its own temporal trajectory, even if the durations over which the life-time of an animal or plant, meteorological rhythms and the movements of geological formations are played out vary immensely. Secondly, even within the realm of human experience, the identity of a place is not constructed simply from the experiences of its inhabitants. The creation of any place is influenced by those who pass through it, and by its connections with other places. This is particularly so with towns and cities, functioning as nodal points for the exchange of goods, services and information. So, for Massey, among others, a place, brought into existence within the conjunctions of space-time, can only be understood within a frame of reference that is fundamentally open and relativist: it cannot be understood, cannot even exist, outside of the context provided by other places and other peoples. Similarly, to quote Lucy Lippard:

> Place is latitudinal and longitudinal within the map of a person's life. It is temporal and spatial, personal and political. A layered location replete with human histories and memories, place has width as well as depth. It is about connections, what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there, what will happen there.[8]

An urban place, like any other, does not exist in a solid state that has always been and always will be, unchanged and unchanging, nor is it a singular occurrence; rather, it is a process of interaction over time between actors in constant motion, both inside and outside the place itself.

If we were to apply these ideas to a particular place, a town say, we might observe that it is constantly changing, both in terms of the built environment (buildings rise and fall) and its inhabitants (subject to the universal rhythms of the life cycle, constantly travelling, thereby moving both diachronically and spatially, as well as engaged in constant social interactions with each other). A time-lapse photography film of a town that could reduce a century to an hour would show a frenetic, restless organism. The fixed, physical, inanimate components of the built environment do not, by definition, show movement through space, but they change their character as they move through time. They are produced, and hence their movement through time is produced, largely by the actions of their human builders, inhabitants and destroyers

---

[7] Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000), particularly 132-51, "Ancestry, Generation, Substance, Memory, Land", and 219-42, "To Journey Along a Way of Life: Maps, Way Finding and Navigation".

[8] Lucy Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicultural Society* (New York: The New Press, 1997), 7, cited in Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction*, 40.

(though not entirely: natural processes of constant, gradual decay and occasional catastrophic events such as storms, floods and earthquakes also play their part), and those actions are in turn the product of the interactions of ideas with the physical world. This interaction takes place as the outcome of contending needs, desires, and ambitions; in short, the interaction between the mental and physical world is the product of power relationships. Those power relationships occur in various fields of human activity: political, economic, social, and cultural, for example, and they are influenced by gender, ethnicity and other factors. For Massey, place is "a moment within power geometries". This is a "power-imbued environment", where individuals are "emplaced in social, sensory and material contexts, characterised by, and productive of, particular power configurations that they experience through their whole bodies and that are constantly changing".[9]

A place whose human constituents number into the thousands or more invariably generates complexities that require some form of government. The relationships produced by the interactions between individuals that help constitute a "place" must therefore be discussed in terms not just of time and space but also of politics and political power. For Steven Lukes, political power is essentially constituted by the ability of one agent, be it an individual, group or institution, to compel or persuade another individual, group or institution, to adopt a course of action other than that which the latter would otherwise have perceived as being in their best interest: where both parties agree from the outset that the act is in both of their interests, then "power" is not exerted, and "politics" does not happen.[10] The course of action may actually be inaction, where a party is dissuaded, or prevented, from doing something. Where compulsion is in play, the enforced act - or non-act - continues to be recognised as against the perceived interest of the compelled subject, but where the act is committed as the result of persuasion, then the subject on whom power is exerted is convinced that this is the best option in the circumstances, and therefore accedes to the pressure to act in the desired manner. Of course, persuasion can take many forms: at one extreme, it is practically identical with forced compliance, an "offer you can't refuse", where the only alternative is extinction, incarceration or some other dire consequence. In such situations there may be no real choice. At the other extreme, the most effective form of persuasion occurs where the subject is completely unaware of having been persuaded.

The observation that sometimes we are unwittingly persuaded to act against our own best interest tempts us to decide for ourselves what is in the subject's best interest, with the logical consequence that where the subject does not adopt this course of action, and appears to make their "wrong" decision voluntarily, we can only conclude that we are witnessing an instance of Marxian/Gramscian "false consciousness".[11] Sometimes people do not act in their best interests, but identifying instances of this in history leads to a problem. To make such a judgment about people in the past whose experiences and circumstances might be very different from ours risks displaying our intellectual arrogance, as we consign the subject to "the enormous condescension of posterity": who are we to judge whether or not a particular course of action is in someone's best

[9] D. Massey, "A Global Sense of Place", in *Reading Human Geography*, ed. T. Barnes and D. Gregory (London: Arnold, 1997), 315-23.
[10] Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (2nd edn., Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
[11] Summarised in Mary R. Jackman, *The Velvet Glove: Paternalism and Conflict in Gender, Class, and Race Relations* (Berkeley: California UP, 1994), 30-2.

interest?[12] Lukes' answer to this conundrum is to assume that where the hegemonic power makes a significant investment in strategies aimed at persuading the subject that a desired course of action is in their best interest, then an alternative view is indeed held, or is at least conceivable, which the hegemonic power believes has to be suppressed. Truths that appear self-evident and immediately demonstrable to all within a given culture do not require the persuasive apparatus associated with belief systems to shore them up: ideologies are not constructed around the observation that the sun rises every morning (but they have been constructed around notions of what this daily celestial movement might signify). We do not have to set ourselves up as the arbiters of "true" or "false" consciousness, merely identify points where the hegemonic power makes a significant investment in persuasion. Thus, the crucial point here is to study the means by which elites represent themselves and construct legitimating and justificatory discourses. This does not always have to be done consciously, since a human system, like a biological organism, does not need a conscious agent as designer in order to evolve and adapt to changing conditions that might otherwise threaten its survival: systems and organisms that do not adapt sufficiently simply do not survive. Lukes' discussion of power reminds us once again of the centrality of culture at the heart of human activity.

The importance of cultural hegemony is also apparent through the application of Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities".[13] This can be extended beyond nations to apply to smaller groupings such as towns and cities, whose inhabitants cannot know every other inhabitant on a face-to-face basis and have to assume that what binds them all together within their given "community" is a set of shared assumptions and attitudes. In turn, such urban "imagined communities", like Russian dolls, are nested within larger, regional, national or sometimes even supranational "imagined communities". However, before accepting such a notion we must first ask who is doing the imagining. The community that is imagined, and whose imagined nature is communicated to subsequent generations, is all too often only that of the elite, since they have privileged access to the means of recording their culture. This tendency is of course all the more difficult to resist for the historian, working on past societies, rather than the social scientist, particularly if the subject of research is a predominantly non-literate, highly hierarchical and patriarchal society for which extant records are fragmentary. Thus the consideration of culture and its representation leads us, naturally and inevitably, to consider inequalities of various kinds (of wealth, education, social status, and political power, among others) and the means by which those inequalities are maintained and justified.

---

[12] One approach to this problem is to assume that where subjects appear to accept the ideology of those exercising power over them, in instances where such ideology clearly - to our eyes - works against their own best interests, their 'acceptance' is only tactical: that, in other words, they know full well that the ideological underpinnings of the hegemonic system under which they are exploited are faulty, but calculate that it is in their best interests to behave towards their masters as though they do genuinely accept them. This is the model developed by James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale UP, 1990) with particular relation to modern serf and slave societies, where he suggests that such tactics are generally so successful that the masters themselves are usually deceived into thinking that their ideology is fully adopted by those they exploit. While this is very persuasive, and demonstrably true in many cases, as Lukes has pointed out, it is unlikely to be the whole story, since it is inconceivable that no member of an exploited group ever buys in to the ideology of their exploiters: Lukes, *Power*, 129-30. We are still left, then, with the problem of "false consciousness". The quotation comes from E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1980), 12.

[13] B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

To capture a place in a net of words it is necessary to disentangle the three dimensions of time, space, and power. However, in attempting this task, we must be ever mindful of the possibility that the "place" we have captured may have existed only for a fraction of its inhabitants. The "place" that would have been experienced by the rest may continue to be elusive. Historians' models of the particular society they study are determined by their interaction with the extant sources, as well, of course, by their own *weltanschauung* or *habitus*.

Aims and Sources

The present volume is offered as a contribution to our understanding of later medieval Bristol, but there is no aspiration to produce the "definitive" history of the town in the fifteenth century. Even if such a thing were possible, it could not be achieved in a single volume, and would probably be beyond any single author. As the title suggests, this book is more restricted in its scope. In fact, my aims are quite limited. The book is based on the premise that "place" is produced through the confluence of time, space and power. Questions are asked about Bristolians' sense of their location in time, in the wider world, their sense of Bristol as a place, and of their relation to various structures and levels of power. The contention is that the coming together of these threads constitutes a process of emplacement whose understanding allows us to acquire new perspectives on the traditional concerns of urban history. As such, the book is primarily an exercise in cultural history, asking what fifteenth-century Bristol meant to its inhabitants. To answer this question requires the analysis of not just documentary sources of record, but also archaeology, literature, and the visual and plastic arts.[14] Since there is no claim to expertise in all of these areas, many of the conclusions must to some degree be tentative.

The study of the trajectories of those human actors whose combinations help to constitute fifteenth-century Bristol might be seen as entailing no more than an exercise in prosopography. However, the study of the collective biographies of the inhabitants of a place and their contacts could never provide adequate answers. For one thing, it would be practically impossible to achieve for a town the size of fifteenth-century Bristol: if attempted through, for example, network theory, the net needed to capture the interconnections and contacts of all elite Bristolians, let alone all Bristolians, of a given generation would be unmanageably huge, unwieldy and unacceptably devouring of resources and time. Even more fundamentally, individuals do not exist merely as atomized particles seeking their own perceived self-interests independently of any frameworks provided by society or culture. Thus, the study of a particular place - in human terms - must involve the study of structures, processes and organisations relating to such categories as the political, social, cultural, economic and religious that, while ultimately created by individuals, also contain, and constrain, them. These structures, processes and organisations may exist either entirely contained within, or partially external to the place in question.

As stated above, the analysis is largely confined to the elites: mainly the burgess class, and mainly the adult males among them, because it is only this group that has left evidence of how its members conceived their position within temporal, spatial and political contexts, and it is regarding this group that most of the evidence of economic and public life has survived. At the same time, it is acknowledged that theirs is not the

[14] An analogous approach is taken by the contributors to *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester, c.1200-1600*, ed. Catherine A. M. Clarke (Wales UP, 2011).

only story to tell, and that beyond this minority the majority of Bristolians may well have had different, perhaps conflicting perspectives, even if their stories are now for the most part irrecoverable.

This approach still leaves us with considerable methodological problems. As a rule, urban elites, even clerical elites, do not appear to have devoted much time, effort or thought to more abstract concerns touching their identity or place in the wider world, as understood by modern, secular intellectuals; or, if they did, they did not see fit to record their thoughts. It has been possible to do valuable work on what might be called the *mentalité* or cultural contexts of Londoners, but that city's archival resources and the sophistication and size of its elites make it exceptional. [15] Among provincial towns and cities the task is more difficult, but some degree of success in such an endeavour is possible as, variously, Charles Phythian-Adams and Gervase Rosser have shown.[16]

There is little surviving contemporary opinion on the subject of later medieval Bristol. Two contrasting views of Bristol are provided, on the one hand, by a late fourteenth-century collection of verses, in deliberately bad and obscure Latin, on the character of various English towns and cities, called by its editor *The Stores of the Cities*, and on the other by a fifteenth-century poem, once attributed to Lydgate, *The Childe of Bristowe*. For the anonymous author of *The Stores of the Cities*, Bristol was a place marked by the miserliness of its inhabitants:

> *Brystoll'*
> *Hec sunt Brystollys: ladelys, doȝelys quoque bollys,*
> *burges negones, karine, clocheriaque chevones,*
> *webbys cum rotis - hec sunt staura ciuitoris.*

Which the verses' editor, A. G. Rigg, translates as:

> These are Bristol's: ladles, barrel-plugs, bowls, niggardly citizens, boats, bell-towers and beams, webs on wheels - these are the stores of the city.[17]

Barrels and boats might be read as references to Bristol's maritime, commercial character, while if "webbys" could be interpreted as 'weavers', then it becomes a reference to Bristol's textile industry, but the one reference that appears relatively clear is to the "niggardly citizens"!

The Childe of Bristowe exists as part of a compendium of works in a small paper book of the mid-fifteenth century, including a number of pieces by Lydgate.[18] The

---

[15] Sylvia Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (Chicago UP, 1948); Caroline Barron, "The Political Culture of Medieval London", in *Political Culture in Late Medieval England* ed. Linda Clark and Christine Carpenter (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 111-34; idem., "Chivalry, Pageantry and Merchant Culture in Medieval London", in *Heraldry, Pageantry, and Social Display in Medieval England*, eds. Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), 219-41; idem., *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People, 1200-1500* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004).

[16] Charles Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a City: Coventry and the Urban Crisis of the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge UP, 1979); idem, "Ceremony and the Citizen: The Communal Year at Coventry, 1450-1550", in *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700: Essays in Urban History,* eds. Peter Clark and Paul Slack (Toronto UP, 1972), 57-85; Gervase Rosser, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town,' *Urban History,* 23:1 (1996), 5-25.

[17] A. G. Rigg, "The Stores of the Cities", Anglia, 85 (1967), 127-37, at 128-9. The poem is discussed by Catherine A. M. Clarke, *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England, 700-1400* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006), 124-6.

[18] "The Childe of Bristow, a Poem by John Lydgate", ed. Clarence Hoper, Camden Miscellany, 4, Camden Soc., Old Ser., vol. 73 (1859), 3-28. The attribution to Lydgate is probably not merited: Barbara Hanawalt, "'The Childe of Bristowe' and the Making of Middle-Class Adolescence", in *Bodies and Disciplines:*

"Childe" in the story is the son of a gentry father who lived about seven miles outside of Bristol. The hero eschewed his father's suggested career choices of the Church and the Law in favour of an apprenticeship with a Bristol merchant. The father had made his fortune through deceit and usury, and had displeased God, and after his death (with his tithes unpaid) his son received visions of him suffering in flames. As a dutiful son, the Childe spent first his own inheritance to make amends for his father's sins, and then pledged his freedom in return for the sum of £40 from his master, which he also spent for the health of his father's soul. As a result, his father was allowed into Heaven. The master had suspected that his apprentice was squandering the money on gambling and the high life, but when the apprentice told him the truth he was so moved that he made him his heir and arranged a lucrative marriage for him, so that through his filial piety and his own generosity and that of his master the Childe ended richer than he would have been had he hung on to his inheritance and not used it to relieve his father's suffering. In this poem the clergy, lawyers and gentry are portrayed as morally inferior to merchants, and at the beginning of the poem, when deciding upon a career the Childe declares that "for to forsake my soule helthe/ for any wynnyng of worldes welthe,/ that will y never do", and instead:

> Hit hath ever be myn avise
> to lede my lyf by marchandise,
> to lerne to bye and selle;
> that good getyn by marchantye,
> it is trouthe, as thenketh me,
> ther with will I melle.
> Here at Bristow dwelleth on
>
> is held right a juste trew man,
> as y here now telle;
> his prentys will y be vij yer,
> his science truly for to lere
> and with hym will y dwelle.

Thus, the poem makes a striking reversal of the usual criticism of merchants as being too intent upon making money to care sufficiently for their souls.[19] As such, it is also a contradiction of the claim that appears in the *Stores of the Cities* text. Given that *The Childe of Bristowe* not only presents the merchant as morally upright, but is also set in and around Bristol, it is tempting to see it as having been produced from within that town's mercantile community. As Roger Ladd argues, there is no reason to assume that fifteenth-century merchants were uninterested in literature, a position that will be further explored, and supported, in this book, and so there is the strong possibility that this poem was indeed written by or for a Bristol merchant, perhaps as a riposte to satirical literary attacks on the estate of merchants. The respectability, even sanctity, of Bristol was also emphasised by an early fifteenth-century poem again, very probably, a product of the town's cultural milieu, *Richard the Redeless*, which begins with the poet

---

Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England, ed. Hanawalt and David Wallace (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP , 1996), 155-78, at 172, n. 3. See also Julia Roffey, "Middle English Lives", in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace (CUP, 1999), 610-34, at 626.

[19] This aspect of the poem is discussed in detail in Roger A. Ladd, *Antimercantilism in Late Medieval English Literature* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 119-25. In addition to this work, medieval attitudes to trade are also the subject of Lianna Farber, *An Anatomy of Trade in Medieval Writing: Value, Consent, and Community* (Cornell UP, 2006).

"In a blessid borugh that Bristow is named".[20] This sense of sacredness is also suggested by the depiction of the town in Ricart's *Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, while the same work also stresses the town's great (if spurious) antiquity.

Such fragments of opinion are suggestive, but do not take us very far towards reconstructing what Bristol meant to its inhabitants. Before making any further progress in this direction the problem of evidence must be faced. Unlike anthropologists, sociologists or ethnographers, the historian of a later medieval town is obviously unable engage in a personal interview process; but nor can he/she read their letters and memoirs for these, if they ever existed, exist no more. None of them left behind an archive of their correspondence, as did a few contemporary gentry families like the Pastons, Stonors or, indeed, the mercantile Celys of London and Calais.[21] Luckily for its inhabitants, but not for its historians, medieval Bristol was never subjected to the kind of inquisitorial investigations that have allowed us to learn so much about life and belief in the Occitan village of Montaillou in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.[22] In fact, this author knows of no account by a medieval Bristolian that directly addresses the topics with which this book is concerned. What is left behind needs careful interpretation, and hence, inescapably, the imposition of modern analytical categories upon the evidence. While it is not possible to reconstruct, definitively, later medieval Bristolians' sense of place, it is possible to assemble some of the components that would have played a part in its construction.

With this in mind, it might be thought unwise to have chosen fifteenth-century Bristol as the subject of my exploration. The town, it is true, has a fine collection of charters, civic and guild ordinances, property deeds and wills, while the records of central government and the central law courts, in later medieval England are as rich as any comparable archives for anywhere else in Europe, provide a wealth of material on Bristol, as they do for other English towns; but there is also a paucity of written evidence. Apart from the absence of letters and memoirs, almost no borough court records or civic financial records have survived from before the 1530s, and there are no extant minutes of the meetings of mayor and common council, only records of decisions made; nor do any private ledgers or other such business records survive.[23] However, in sharp contrast to this gloomy picture, Bristol produced two unique sources, written or begun within two years of each other from 1478, which allow access to areas of the town's culture denied to students of most other English towns of the period.

---

[20] See below, Appendix Three.

[21] *The Plumpton Correspondence: A Series of Letters, Chiefly Domestic, Written in the Reigns of Edward IV, Richard III, Henry VII and Henry VIII*, ed. Thomas Stapleton, Camden Soc., Old Ser., 4 (1839); *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. N. Davis, R. Beadle, C. Richmond, Early English Text Society, Supplementary Ser., 20-22 (OUP, 2004-5); *The Cely Letters, 1472-1488,* ed. A. Hanham, Early English Text Society, Original Ser., 273 (OUP, 1975); *The Stonor Letters and Papers, 1290-1483*, ed. C. L. Kingsford, 2 vols., Camden Soc., 3rd Ser., 29-30 (1919).

[22] Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village 1294-1324* (London: Scholar Press, 1978).

[23] The paucity of Bristol's extant archives is made clear by comparison with those of such provincial towns as Ipswich (Nicholas R. Amor, *Late Medieval Ipswich: Trade and Industry* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 25-7) Norwich (Carole Rawcliffe, "Introduction", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. C. Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (London and New York: Hambledon and London, 2004), ix-xxxvii, at xxix-xxx), and York (*York House Books, 1461-1490*, ed. Lorraine C. Attreed, 2 vols. (Stroud: Alan Sutton for Richard III and York History Trust, 1991)).

William Worcestre's detailed notes of the topography of his place of birth provide an unparalleled description of the town's physical environment.[24] He compiled them whilst staying with his sister in her house in St Thomas Street in August/September 1480. Born in Bristol in 1415, he began his studies at Oxford in 1432. By 1438 he had entered the service of Sir John Fastolf of Norfolk, a wealthy knight who had acquired considerable estates, largely through service in the Hundred Years' War. He remained in his service, as secretary, agent, and steward of his Wiltshire estates at Castle Combe, until Fastolf's death in 1459, and beyond, spending several years as one of his executors trying to untangle his complex and contested business affairs. Worcestre died between the autumn of 1480 and summer, 1485. Worcestre's Bristol notes are part of a larger collection he made during a series of travels across England and Wales.[25] As such, he is comparable to his near contemporary, the Warwickshire John Rous, as one of later medieval England's leading antiquarian scholars; both may be considered forerunners of the great tradition of British antiquarianism, topography and chorography that lasted into the eighteenth century.[26]

The *Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, begun by the town clerk, Robert Ricart, in the winter of 1478/9, combines an exceedingly rare provincial town chronicle with collections of legal precedents, civic oaths and other related material which, with its lavish illustrations, make it unparalleled among the products of later medieval English urban culture.[27] Ricart was Bristol town clerk from Michaelmas 1478 until he was replaced by Thomas Harding in October 1489, his death probably coming at around that time.[28] Few other definite facts are known of him, although he seems to have been a merchant, and on good terms with members of the governing elite in the 1480s (including William Canynges, Robert Strange, William Spencer, William Byrde, all of whom served as mayors, and John Twynyho, the Recorder) and possibly with another mayoral family, that of Philip Mede in the 1450s, but aside from Town Clerk he held no other civic office, so he cannot be said to have been part of this inner elite.

As will be argued in Chapter Two, the chronicle in Ricart's *Kalendar* was not unique in Bristol, and nor was it unprecedented for a provincial town to produce a chronicle. However, it was an unusually extensive chronicle, and its uniqueness lay in its combination with the other material that made up the volume, together with the accompanying scheme of illustrations. The Bristol tradition of chronicle-writing doubtless followed that of London, but other provincial urban chronicles survive for a small number of towns, such as Colchester and Coventry.[29] Bristol was once again

---

[24] This account is based on Nicholas Orme, "Worcestre, William (1415-1480x85)", *ODNB*, (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29967 [accessed 21/03/13]), and Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), 327-41. For Worcestre's Bristol notes see *Worcestre, Topography*.

[25] *Itineraries of William Worcestre*, ed. J. H. Harvey (OUP, Oxford Medieval Texts, 1969).

[26] Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II*, 308-27.

[27] Edited, in part, by Lucy Toulmin Smith for the Camden Society in 1872. A complete edition has not yet been produced.

[28] For the dates of Ricart as town clerk see Lee, "Political Communication", Appendix One. Otherwise, this account of Ricart's life is taken from Fleming, "Making History", 307-8. For Bristol antiquaries generally, see Irvine E. Gray, *Antiquaries of Gloucestershire and Bristol* (Bristol: BGAS, 1981).

[29] I am grateful to Professor Richard Britnel for sharing with me his work on the Colchester Red Paper Book and Red Parchment Book, both of which were edited by W. Gurney Benham, *The Red Paper Book of Colchester* (Colchester: Essex County Standard, 1902), and *The Oath Book, or Red Parchment Book of Colchester* (Colchester: Essex County Standard, 1907). The best introduction to later medieval Colchester is R.H. Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300-1525* (CUP, 1986). Peter Fleming, *Coventry and the Wars of the Roses* (Dugdale Soc./Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Stratford-on-Avon, Dugdale Soc.

unique, however, in the strength of its tradition of manuscript chronicle, or annal, writing, which lasted far into the eighteenth century, and beyond this the city's historiographical lineage proceeds in a fairly continuous chain until the present.[30]

Another local author of manuscript annals, unpublished until the nineteenth century, was John Smyth of North Nibley. Smyth's subject was not Bristol, but the Berkeley dynasty, on whom he wrote a comprehensive family history, now usually known as *The Lives of the Berkeleys*, which he completed in 1618. The Berkeleys' influence on the history of medieval Bristol is such that Smyth's account is an essential contribution to the town's historiography. Having been educated at Oxford and the Middle Temple, Smyth went on to become the Berkeley steward. He made full use of the family's extensive archive, including documents now lost, as well as family tradition and many central government records. He was an exemplary historian, and his account provides us with a unique insight into the history of a substantial landed family.[31]

The eclipse of Bristol's tradition of manuscript annals was precipitated by the appearance of printed histories of the city.[32] The first of these, William Barrett's *History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol*, was published in 1789. Barrett was a conscientious and thorough scholar, but his work had a fatal flaw, derived from the young poet and hoaxer Thomas Chatterton. From 1768 Chatterton fed Barrett a stream of concocted *faux* medieval "evidence" that the latter greedily, and uncritically, incorporated into his text, alongside material that he had assiduously gleaned from genuine sources. Soon after publication of the *History and Antiquities* Chatterton's hoax was mercilessly revealed, and Barrett died within the year, his demise hastened by the shock and dismay at the public ridicule of his life's work. Barrett's successor was Samuel Seyer, who between 1821 and 1823 published two volumes of his *Memoirs Historical and Topographical of Bristol* (the third was never completed); he had already published an edition of the civic charters. His approach might be characterised as embodying the new, "scientific" approach to historical research, based on the critical analysis of primary sources, as opposed to Barrett's sensationalist "Gothickry", but that would certainly be unfair to the latter, even if not over-generous to the former. Seyer's work is still of considerable value today, although his prejudices are all too evident: as an Anglican minister, he had little time for Catholics and non-conformists.

An aspect of the nineteenth-century's more rigorous approach to history and archaeology was the emergence of learned societies. One of England's earliest local history and archaeology societies was founded in Bristol in 1876. This, the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, was partly the brainchild of John Taylor,

---

Occasional Papers, 50, 2011); *Six Town Chronicles*, ed. R. Flenley (OUP, 1911), 27-9; Alan Dyer, "English Town Chronicles", *Local Historian*, 12 (1976/7), 285-92; Robert Tittler, "Reformation, Civic Culture and Collective Memory in English Provincial Towns", *Urban History*, 24 (1997), 281-302; idem, *Townspeople and Nation: English Urban Experience, 1540-1640* (Stanford UP, 2001), 121-39; Denis Hay, "History and Historians in England and France during the Fifteenth Century", *BIHR*, 35 (1962), 111-27. Here, 17th and 18th-century manuscript histories are referred to as annals, medieval ones as chronicles, reflecting contemporary practice rather than any essential difference between the two.

[30] Rosemary Sweet, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 76-8.

[31] Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*; a summary of his life and work is provided by Peter Fleming and Michael Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle: Nibley Green, 1470* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), 17-19.

[32] The following discussion of Barrett and Seyer is based on Joseph H. Bettey, *The First Historians of Bristol: William Barrett and Samuel Seyer* (BHA, 108, 2003). An overview of Bristol's historiography up to the opening of the 20th century is provided in Cronne, Bristol Charters, 1378-1499, 1-10.

librarian of the Bristol Museum and Library, and afterwards city librarian.[33] The BGAS continues in existence, encouraging high-quality research and publishing an annual volume of Transactions. Taylor was an historian in his own right, his most important work being the *Ecclesiastical History*, which formed the second of three volumes of *Bristol Past and Present*, published in 1882 and written with James Fawckner Nicholls, his predecessor as city librarian and co-founder of the BGAS. Their work is attractively written and presented, but essentially no more than a synthesis of earlier research. Two years later another Bristol learned society was founded, the Clifton Antiquarian Club, which continued to publish its Proceedings until its dissolution in 1912.[34] A prominent member of both BGAS and CAC was John Latimer, editor of *The Bristol Mercury*.[35] Between 1887 and his death in 1904 he produced a series of *Annals of Bristol* from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. In some ways these are a throwback to an earlier age, since they consist of material arranged in a broadly chronological fashion, and without footnotes; on the other hand, Latimer was a diligent and careful researcher, and used with care, his works remain a valuable source. He also produced a history of the Merchant Venturers (Bristol's association of overseas merchants, founded in the mid-sixteenth century) and, more germane to the concerns of this book, a useful survey of the Bristol charters.[36]

In some ways Latimer's death saw the end of an era in which Bristol's historiography had been in the hands of gifted amateurs. The year of the BGAS's foundation, 1876, also saw the opening of University College, Bristol, reconstituted as the University of Bristol in 1909, and the twentieth-century growth of universities, and of university departments of History, saw the study of History move into a new, more "professional" phase. Historians from the University of Bristol have been prominent in the Bristol Record Society, founded in 1929 and which continues to devote itself to the study and dissemination of historical records relating to the city, publishing an annual volume of records, and in the Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, which produced a unique series of pamphlets on Bristol's history. Since the 1980s historians from Bristol Polytechnic, from 1992 the University of the West of England (UWE), have played an important part in researching Bristol's history, and the foundation of the Regional History Centre within UWE in 1997 has provided a focus for amateur and professional research, while both universities now play their part in the BRS and BGAS. Another aspect of the more "professional" approach to Bristol's historical research is the provision of archival facilities. Bristol has had a public library since the early seventeenth century. When the Bristol Record Office was established in 1924 it was the first borough record office and only the second local record office in the country.[37]

While "academic" or "professional" attention has been a feature of Bristol's historiography since the beginning of the twentieth century, the enthusiastic "amateur" interest in its history shown by many of its inhabitants has continued, and flourished in collaboration with university historians. This interest is reflected in the large number of local history societies found within the city, represented by an umbrella organisation,

---

[33] William George, "Taylor, John (1829–1893)", rev. Elizabeth Baigent, *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27061 [accessed 21/03/13]); G. Le G. Norgate, "Nicholls, James Fawckner (1818–1883)", rev. Elizabeth Baigent, *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20111 [accessed 21/03/13]).

[34] The club was resurrected in 2006: www.cliftonantiquarian.co.uk/ (accessed 21/03/13).

[35] This account is based on John Latimer's obituary, *TBGAS*, 26 (1903), 207-12.

[36] Although not without errors: Cronne, *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 9-10.

[37] www.bristol.gov.uk/page/leisure-and-culture/bristol-record-office-what-we-do (accessed 21/03/13).

the Avon Local History and Archaeological Association. Some of the work done by modern amateur historians of Bristol has been of a very high order, of great value in its own right, and of considerable use to academics.

One of the earliest examples of a substantial work of academic scholarship on medieval Bristol is E. W. W. Veale's doctoral thesis, "Burgage Tenure in Mediaeval Bristol", published as the first volume of the BRS edition of *The Great Red Book of Bristol* in 1931.[38] This scholarly legal study is very much in the tradition of James Tait's research on the legal and constitutional history of English medieval towns, work that would be given definitive shape in his *The Medieval English Borough* of 1936.[39] Veale lectured in law at Bristol University, but many of the leading academic figures in the city's medieval historiography have been based outside the city. Such was the case with Eleanora Carus-Wilson, quite possibly the most significant twentieth-century historian of medieval Bristol.[40] While her life was lived largely in and around London, some of her most important work was done on the economic and social history of medieval Bristol, with particular reference to its overseas trade. Born in 1897, she belonged to the second generation of female academics: her mother, like her mentor Eileen Power, had been among the first women to benefit from higher education in an English university. Carus-Wilson's historical interests, adopting a social science rather than legal or constitutional perspective, were characteristic of these pioneering female medieval historians. My debt to her work is obvious.

While Carus-Wilson and many others published very valuable work on medieval Bristol in the pages of the *TBGAS*, and other journals, or edited important editions of primary sources for the BRS, production of monographs in this area has been slow and sporadic. In 1985 David Harriss Sacks published his Ph.D. thesis as *Trade, Society and Politics in Bristol, 1500-1640*.[41] Despite its title, this actually has much to say about the overseas trade and social composition of the fifteenth century town; it also forms the basis of his much better-known 1992 monograph, *The Widening Gate: Bristol and the Atlantic Economy, 1450-1700.*[42] This book has rather less to say about the fifteenth century, and is prone to making ambitious claims that are not always borne out by the evidence. More firmly medieval was Anita Loy Beetham Fisher's thesis, "The Merchants of Medieval Bristol, 1350-1500".[43] Hers is a thorough study containing a good deal of useful information; Beetham-Fisher owes a clear debt to a classic work on urban elites, Sylvia Thrupp's *The Merchant Class of Medieval London, 1300-1500* which, while it appeared as long ago as 1948, is still inspiring.[44] In 1987 there appeared Simon Penn's thesis on the "Social and Economic Aspects of Fourteenth-Century Bristol".[45]This is also fairly traditional in approach, but thorough and very useful for this century. Christian Liddy's excellent Ph.D. thesis, a comparative study of the relations between Bristol and York and the Crown, was published in 2005 as *War, Politics and Finance in Late Medieval*

[38] *GRBB*, Introduction, *BRS*, 2 (1931).
[39] J. Tait, *The Medieval English Borough: Studies on its Origins and Constitutional History* (Manchester UP, 1936). Tait had begun work on this area in 1921. For useful surveys of English medieval urban historiography, see: Susan Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns* (OUP, 1977), and David M. Palliser, "Introduction", in *CUHB*, 7-11.
[40] Peter Mathias, "Wilson, Eleanora Mary Carus- (1897–1977)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30905 [accessed 22/03/13]).
[41] 2 vols., New York: Garland.
[42] California UP: 1992.
[43] University of Oregon Ph.D. Thesis, 1987.
[44] Chicago UP, 1948.
[45] University of Birmingham Ph.D., 1987.

English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350-1400.[46] Excellent though this is, it pretends to be neither a study of broader aspects of the town's history within its fifty-year period, nor of the fifteenth century. Since then, two important Ph.D. theses on later medieval Bristol have been produced by students at UWE: James Lee's "Political Communication in Early Tudor England: the Bristol Elite, the Urban Community and the Crown, c. 1471-c.1553" (2006), and Tim Bowly's "The Land Divides, the Sea Unites: The Communities of Bristol and its Hinterland and their Relationships with Ireland and South Wales in the Long Fifteenth Century" (2013). Clive Burgess has published a string of very significant articles on piety and parish life in medieval Bristol, as well as editing the pre-Reformation records of All Saints', while Evan Jones has shed a great deal of new light on John Cabot and Bristol exploration in the early Tudor period.[47] The archaeology of medieval Bristol has certainly not been neglected, and as the result of the rescue of archaeology prompted by post-war clearances and redevelopment our understanding of the town's physical environment has been greatly augmented. [48] However, surveying the historiography of later medieval Bristol as a whole, it must be said that it is far from complete or even particularly voluminous, considering the town's importance, and in comparison with places such as York, Norwich or Southampton.[49] This is all the more surprising given Bristol's long historiographical tradition and the excellent historical societies and archive services which it enjoys. The present volume is intended to make a contribution, however small, towards rectifying this situation.

The Structure of the Book

The book proceeds in three sections: Time, Space and Power. Each, as far as possible, begins at the most distant point from the point of view of an inhabitant of fifteenth-century Bristol. So, along the axis of time the focus moves from what can be recovered of a fifteenth-century Bristolian's understanding of the place's most distant past, deep time constructed from what we today see largely as myth rather than history, through the evidence for a more "historical" understanding of the more recent past, to end by considering the exercise of memory, getting as close as possible to the actor's own consciousness of his existence in time, as well as considering how and why individuals sought to perpetuate their post-mortem presence in others' memories. This section has been influenced by Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History and Forgetting*.[50] While not entirely agreeing with all his assumptions about the relationship between archival history and individual or collective memory, his discussion of the relationship between "history" and "memory" is useful, as is his stress on the importance of forgetting. Aside from the practical necessity of forgetting most of our lived experience, the practice of

[46] Woodbridge: Boydell/Royal Historical Society, 2005.

[47] Burgess: see below, Chapter Three, n. 52. The work of Evan Jones on Bristol exploration is represented on the University of Bristol's Cabot Project website:
http://www.bristol.ac.uk/history/research/cabot.html (accessed 20/03/13).

[48] Summarised in Robert Jones, "Bristol", in *Twenty-Five Years of Archaeology in Gloucestershire: A Review of New Discoveries and New Thinking in Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire and Bristol, 1979-2004*, ed. Neil Holbrook and John Juřica, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Report, 3 (Cirencester: Cotswold Archaeological Trust, 2006), 189-209.

[49] David Palliser, *Tudor York* (OUP, 1980), idem, *Medieval York* (OUP, forthcoming, 2014); *Medieval Norwich*, ed. Rawcliffe and Wilson; Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester*; Colin Platt, *Medieval Southampton: The Port and Trading Community, A.D. 1000-1600* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973). A similar point about later medieval Bristol's relative neglect is made by Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 12-13.

[50] Ricoeur, *Memory, History and Forgetting*, trans. K. Blamey and D. Pellauer (Chicago UP, 2004).

strategically "forgetting" inconvenient or unsettling events is common, not least in fifteenth-century Bristol, where uncomfortable memories appear to have been deliberately excluded from the historical record. The book has also been influenced by the work of Maurice Halbwachs on the social construction of memory.[51] William Worcestre's notes allow us to get close to one man's own memories of, for example, his Bristol youth, but even these, Halbwachs would argue, were socially constructed, in the sense that they were born out of Worcestre's interaction with his contemporaries, as are all memories, whether individual or collective. The rest of the discussion of memory and commemoration must be largely confined to collective memory, insofar as it concentrates on strategies for the perpetuation of an individual's memory within his or her community.

The next section is entitled "space" rather than "place" because, although it is concerned with the meanings invested in spaces experienced by fifteenth-century Bristolians, thereby constituting them as "places" for those experiencing them, I argue that this entire book is about defining Bristol as a "place", seen in its broad sense of being located within the contexts of time, space, and power, and hence this section is but a part of that process. Part, but only part, of what fifteenth-century Bristol meant to contemporaries is constituted by its inhabitants' interactions with the wider world and by their understanding of the town's spatial extent and the spatial distribution of features within whatever boundaries were held to contain it.

Consequently, for "space", we begin with fifteenth-century Bristolians' expanding knowledge, or imaginings, of the furthest reaches of their world, exploring contacts, primarily through commerce, with other parts of western Europe, followed by Britain and Ireland, until we enter the town itself, to explore its physical and symbolic topography. This section makes considerable use of "economic" or "demographic" data, but does so ultimately as an aid to the understanding of Bristolians' sense of the world around them. In this, its debt to Massey's notion of open, relativist space is obvious: Bristolians' sense of the world around them is naturally inseparable from their experience of that world, and this in turn plays an important part in constituting "Bristol". In the final chapter of this section, Worcestre's notes are used to reconstruct an imaginary journey he might have taken during his visit in 1480. While his Bristol perambulations were in many ways the exact opposite of the *dérives* of a Parisian *flâneur*, the more or less abstract routes chosen by a modern-day psychogeographer, or indeed, the authority and private property-flouting excursions of de Certeau's urban pedestrians, since his walks were directed towards a very particular, practical, rather than abstract, end, and were thus carefully structured and disciplined (albeit in a manner now difficult to reconstruct precisely), nonetheless, the realisation of the importance of walking the townscape as a means of comprehending it, as urged more recently by situationalists and psychogeographers, is something that Worcestre himself would have readily understood, and this accounts for the considerable space devoted here to the attempt to recreate the Bristol he saw through his notes.[52]

---

[51] M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. L. Closer (Chicago UP, 1992). Halbwachs's ideas are discussed in Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester UP, 2007), 158-67. I am grateful to my colleague Dr Michael Richards for introducing me to Halbwachs.

[52] Merlin Coverley, *Psychogeography* (Harpenden: Pocket Essentials, 2006). For comparisons between these modern pedestrians and three other medieval equivalents (Chaucer, Usk, Hoccleve), see Paul Strohm, "Three London Itineraries: Aesthetic Purity and the Composing Process", in his *Theory and the Premodern Text* (Minnesota UP, 2000), 3-19. The usefulness of walking around a place as a way of knowing and understanding it is stressed in Catherine A. M. Clarke, "Introduction: Medieval Chester:

Finally, the consideration of political power begins with Bristolians' relations with those authorities more geographically distant, and subjects the town's dealings with central government and regional lordship to close scrutiny, before finishing with a study of power as exercised within the town and county by civic government. While the overall conception of this section is deeply indebted to the insights provided by Lukes, the work of Michel Foucault, de Certeau and Lefevbre is also influential here, particularly with regard to the relationship between urban space and political power.[53]

The structure just described of course reverses the movement of the book's stated aim of looking out at the world from the perspective of a particular point in time and space. Instead, in each section the movement is from distance to proximity. This is a response to the problems created by the nature of the surviving evidence. Since it is not possible to reconstruct the *mentalité* of a fifteenth-century Bristolian through "thick description" or any other methodology dependent on direct observation, interviews or the analysis of a plethora of personal documentation, a more tangential approach has been adopted: it has almost been like "creeping up" on the subject, stalking it from afar before moving in for a closer look. It has been necessary to adopt this iterative approach, embracing a repeated rhythm of approach and distancing, as a substitute for a close reading of such missing texts or of situations now long since passed our ability to witness.

Views from the Walls", in *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester c. 1200-1600*, ed. eadem (Wales UP, 2011), 1-18, at 1-11.

[53] de Certeau, *Practices of Everyday Life*; Lefebvre, *Production of Space*. Among Michel Foucault's writings, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Eng. Trans., NY: Vintage Books, 1995), has been particularly influential on my approach to space and power.

SECTION ONE:

TIME

Chapter One: Foundation Myths

Bristol's Trojan Origins

On Clifton Down William Worcestre came face-face with distant antiquity. On Sunday, 24 September 1480, he rode out to the downs above Ghyston Cliff, now called St Vincent's Rocks, on the Bristol side of the great gorge through which the Avon winds its way from the Severn. Here, he was able to examine what we now know to be an iron-age hill fort, Clifton Camp, made up of three concentric rings of dry-stone ramparts.[54] This is what he made of it:

> The hill-fort (Castellum) upon the high ground not a quarter of a mile distant from Ghyston Cliff, as it is called by the common people, was founded there before the time of William the Conqueror by the Saracens or Jews, by a certain Ghyst, a giant portrayed in the ground. And because so great a hill-fort (Castellum) was probably built in ancient times, it remains to this day as a large circle of great stones piled up, and small onesscattered around, most remarkable to see; the said stones lying thus, in an orderly ring and great circle, whereby a very strong castle (castrum fortissimum) is seen to have been there, which hundreds of years ago hasbeen destroyed and thrown to the ground. And because it is a credit and honour to the district of Bristol and the county of Gloucestershire to have, or to hear of, the origins of impressive fortresses and castles,I write this among other things by way of a reminder of this castleor fortress (Castro siue Fortalicio).[55]

This place, Worcestre tells us, is Ghyston Cliff (vt dicitur a vulgaribus plebeis). Note that this ascription refers only to the name of the cliff, not to what follows, which to our eyes appears far more fantastical. This is Worcestre's speculation on the origins of the 'hill fort'. In his Latin this is described as a castrum, or castle, and the stones he found still standing in a great circle (remanet in hodiernum diem in magno circuitu congeries magnorum lapidum) naturally were to be interpreted as the remains of the great walls of this fortress. Given its evidently ruinous state, Worcestre assumed that it must have been the product of distant antiquity, beyond recorded history. Less than a fortnight earlier he had examined Bristol Castle, by then in a state of disrepair, but still structurally sound; he noted the royal chapel, which had been splendid, "but now roofless, bare and stripped of floors and ceilings", and the constable's quarters beside the Keep, "but the whole thing is thrown down to the ground and ruinous, whence arises great sadness".[56] Ricart noted that the castle had been built by the Earl of Gloucester in the twelfth century, and Worcestre probably concurred.[57] Comparing the two structures, and their relative states of decay, Worcestre would have concluded that the Clifton site exhibited many more than three hundred years' worth of neglect. So far so reasonable, to a modern reader, knowing that iron-age hill forts were still being mis-identified as Roman camps into the nineteenth century, but it is his three candidates for the castle builder that stop us in our tracks. Saracens and Jews are bad enough, since we know very well that the former never lived in this island, and that the latter are only known to have settled in England after the Conquest, and were anyway hardly in a

[54] Clifton Camp is described in James Russell, "The Archaeology of the Parish of Clifton, with a Note on the 833 AD Boundary Survey of Stoke Bishop", *Bristol and Avon Archaeology*, 16 (2000), 73-87, at 73-5. Ghyst's portrait is no longer to be seen.

[55] *Topography*, no 56.

[56] *Topography*, no 422.

[57] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 19.

position, as a people, to erect massive castles, but at least we know that they actually existed. That the hill fort could have been the work of giants seems, however, to take us from bad history into the realms of pure fairy-tale. Is it possible to reconcile these speculations with an assumption that Worcestre is a reliable, not to mention sane, witness?

The clue to understanding Worcestre's first suggestion is provided by Ricart. In his description of the Conqueror's ancestry we find this astonishing statement:

> For in the cronicles of Fraunce I finde the first Duc that was of Normandy,it was Duc Rollo le fort, and he was a Saresyn come oute of Denmark into Fraunce …[58]

In fact, Saresyn was a very slippery term in later medieval England, and while it could indeed refer to the Islamic inhabitants of Iberia, North Africa and the Middle East, it also had a more general meaning, denoting "pagan", or "barbarian", or both.[59] So, Worcestre's statement should be taken to indicate uncivilised non-Christians: uncivilised, but not lacking in technical virtuosity, and so entirely capable of building such an imposing structure.[60] Exactly who he had in mind is impossible to say, but the Danes are likely candidates.

Bristol's Jewish community was relatively small but not insignificant. Like the rest of English Jewry, it was destroyed in 1290 when Edward I ordered the Jews' expulsion.[61] Nearly two hundred years later, they were a hazy, but still present, memory. Worcestre describes the synagogue that had existed between the churches of St Lawrence and St Giles on the old town wall as follows:

> The Jewish Synagogue [Templum judeorum] [was] formerly situated downin the ancient vaults, directly beneath the former parish church of St Gilessituated at the head of The Key, dedicated in the name of a certain god Apollo or some such [nomine certe dee appollinis vel huic simile Honorificatum], according to what many people have told me; and now there are cellars for storing merchandise in the said profane synagogue [in dicto templo prophanato].[62]

Worcestre's Jews were not fellow People of the Book; rather, they were indistinguishable from pagans. For him, and doubtless for his fellow Bristolians, 'Saracens and Jews' were virtually interchangeable. As such they were the archetypal 'other', not quite human, fantasised, feared, and abhored.[63] Worcestre's description of the old synagogue is, in its way, as striking as his remark on the putative Jewish builders

---

[58] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 16.

[59] Siobhain Bly Calkin, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript* (London: Routledge, 2005); Leona F. Cordery, "The Saracens in Middle English Literature: A Definition of Otherness", *Al-Masaq*, 14 (2002), 87 – 99; Danny Gorny, "Why so Saracen? Using Villains to Define the Nation in the Thornton Manuscripts", paper given to 1st Global Conference on Villains and Villainy, Mansfield College Oxford, September, 2009 (http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/gornypaper.pdf [accessed 10/03/13]).

[60] Saracens' technical superiority is discussed by Gorny, "Why so Saracen?", 3-4.

[61] Joe Hillaby, "The Bristol Jewry to 1290", in *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City*, ed. Madge Dresser and Peter Fleming (Chichester: England's Past for Everyone/Phillimore, 2008), 9-18.

[62] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 353.

[63] For the very negative notions of Jews in post-expulsion England see Sylvia Tomasch, "Postcolonial Chaucer and the Virtual Jew", in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), 243-60. For the assumed equivalence of Jew and Saracen, see Geraldine Heng, "The Romance of England: Richard Coer de Lyon, Saracens, Jews, and the Politics of Race and Nation", in ibid, 135-71.

of the Clifton castrum. Worcestre writes of their synagogue, situated in the centre of Bristol, as a temple to a pagan god, and he considers that the worshippers at that temple might be identical with the savage builders of the castrum that lies beyond the bounds of civilisation on the edge of the Avon Gorge.[64] Here is a presence at the heart of the Christian citadel that is profoundly alien, immensely distant in time and in moral orientation, bound not to God but to the Devil. Yet, the physical space once occupied by this satanic people is still there, and is now committed to the most prosaic of purposes, serving as nothing more threatening than a warehouse. Their alternative universe, the antithesis of everything fifteenth-century Bristolians held dear, is both an absence, by God's grace, and an immanent, inescapable, presence, a constant reminder that there was something ancient and dark at the heart of the Godly city.

We now know that England's Jewish population did not pre-date the Conquest, but this seems not to have been a perception shared by Worcestre. Why could they not have come to Britain in antiquity? After all, Joseph of Arimathea made the journey. Or perhaps we should not seek for such a precise rationalisation. Perhaps Jews and Saracens were but two facets of one signifier, that of the alien, undetermined, indefinable, and evil. As such, they expressed states that hung somewhere between the physical and the moral: in the later medieval chivalric romances, being "Saracen" was almost as much an existential category as it was an ethnicity, and a man could become one simply by turning away from God.[65]

So what of the giant, Ghyst? Worcestre's belief in the existence of giants was attested to by the Bible. Genesis assures us that there were giants before the Flood. Their presence in what would become England was confirmed in another source, one that was not sacred, but whose veracity was nonetheless doubted by very few in fifteenth-century England. This was De gestis Britonum, written between 1123 and 1139 by the Norman-Welsh Geoffrey ap Artur of Monmouth, bishop of St Asaph, and now more usually known as the Historia regum Britanniae. In this work Geoffrey of Monmouth adopted a British foundation myth whose origins can be traced to the ninth-century Historia Britonum, probably written by a Welsh cleric. As well as the Historia Britonum, Geoffrey drew on the sixth-century Welsh cleric Gildas's De excidio Britanniae, and the Englishman Bede's eighth-century Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum, but perhaps his most important inspiration was his own fertile imagination. Geoffrey's history of the pre-Saxon kings of Britain contains little that would pass as "history" today, but his tales were immensely influential, and widely believed. Geoffrey tells of how Britain was founded by Brutus, great grandson of Aeneas, the refugee Trojan prince and founder of the Latin race. Brutus gave his name to Britain.[66] Brutus's Trojans were not the first inhabitants, however. Before they could settle into the lordship of this new land they had first to commit an act of genocide. The aboriginal giants they found here were driven into the hills and then, eventually, slaughtered. The last giant, Gogmagog, or Goemagog, was captured, to be forced to wrestle with Brutus's lieutenant, and the founder of Cornwall, Corineus. The fight ended with Gogmagog being hurled into the sea.[67]

---

[64] Although Neale, *Topography*, 199, n. 2, suggests that Worcestre may have been confusing Apollo with Apollyon, a demonic angel, if not the Devil himself.

[65] Gorny, "Why so Saracen?", passim.

[66] Brutus, without the Latin ending, becomes Brut, which in Welsh is pronounced Brit, which gives Britain.

[67] *Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain: an Edition and Translation of De gestis Britonum [Historia Regum Britanniae]*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: Boydell,

This last gasp of the giants was still commemorated in Worcestre's time. A depiction of the giant Gogmagog, cut into the turf of Plymouth Hoe, was refreshed in 1486 and could still be seen in 1602.[68] The portrayal of Ghyst in the ground at Clifton (in terra portraiatum) was probably similar to this depiction. The relationship between stones and giants had been established by Geoffrey of Monmouth: according to him, the stones of Stonehenge began life in Africa, from where they were carried by giants to Ireland, and found their eventual home on Salisbury Plain thanks to Merlin's magic.[69] Compared to this extraordinary labour, piling up enough stones for three dry-stone revetments on Clifton Down would have been child's play for the average giant. Belief in giants was widespread in England until the end of the seventeenth century. By then, Ghyst's memory had faded in Bristol, or at least, he was subsumed into the folk tales of the two giant brothers, Vincent and Goram, who had supposedly carved out Avon Gorge.[70]

Ghyst doubtless took his name from Ghyston Rocks, described at length by Worcestre. He was clearly fascinated by this place, visiting it twice in the course of his month-long stay in Bristol, and revisiting it several times in his notes.[71] Ghyston seems to be a reference to the peculiar interaction of water and rock at the bottom of this section of the gorge.[72] The proximity of this natural feature to the man-made wonder of Clifton Camp seems to have excited the imagination of the locals, with the giant Ghyst as the result. If the later legend of Vincent and Goram preserved something of his story, then to him would have been attributed both chasm and castrum. However, Vincent and Goram seem always to have been treated as picturesque fantasy, and we cannot know if anyone really believed that the gorge was actually the work of a giant.[73] The castrum, on the other hand, was clearly the work of man, a memory of a past people inscribed into the landscape. One reaction of those who came later to this place was another form of inscription in the landscape, namely the mysterious depiction of Ghyst. What motivated those who inscribed Ghyst's image is unknowable, but it did serve to mark his place in time and memory: it was by common account that Worcestre knew the name of Ghyst's

---

2007), 26-9. The role of giants in medieval and modern culture is the subject of Walter Stephens, *Giants in Those Days: Folklore, Ancient History, and Nationalism* (Lincoln and London: Nebraska UP, 1989), particularly (for Galfridian giants), 39-41.

[68] T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London: Methuen, 1950), 161; S. Piggott, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), 49.

[69] *Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain*, 172/3.

[70] Jeremy Harte, "Landscape and Legend", in *England's Landscape: The West*; ed. Barry Cunliffe (London: Collins/English Heritage, 2006), 175-88, at 175-6; Russell, "The Archaeology of the Parish of Clifton", 80-1. Vincent and Goram were familiar figures of fun in 19th-century Bristol, as evidenced by comic treatments of the story in, for example, Thomas Henry Sealy, "The Twin Giants", *Bentley's Miscellany* (1843), 266-540; W. N. Reid and W. E. Hicks, *Leading Events in the History of the Port of Bristol* (Bristol: W. C. Hemmons, 1877), 121-9, based largely on Sealy, and anon., *Bristol Fast and Pleasant* (Bristol: Garroway, n.d., but c. 1881, the date of publication of *Bristol Past and Present*, on which this is obviously a spoof), 11-42. The tradition continues in Eugene Byrne and Simon Gurr, *The Bristol Story: A Graphic and (Mostly) True History of the Greatest City in the World!* (Bristol: Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, 2008), 1-13.

[71] *Topography*, nos. 55, 63-6, 69, 240, 437.

[72] Richard Coates and Jennifer Scherr, "Some Local Place-Names in Medieval and Early-Modern Bristol", *TBGAS*, vol. 129 (2011), 155-96, at 177-9.

[73] A possible reference to such a belief is Leland's comment that, "Sum thinke that a great pece of the depenes of the haven from S. Vincents to Hung Rode [i.e. from Ghyston Cliff to the Severn] hathe be made by hand": *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535-1543*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith (London: G. Bell, 1908), pt. X, 91. For Leland, Camden and their intellectual context, see Stan Mendyk, "Early British Chorography", *The Sixteenth-Century Journal*, 17:4 (1986), 459-81.

rock, and doubtless it was through common memory that he learnt about the history, we would say legend, of the place. Perhaps he learnt this during his Bristol childhood. Similarly, it was on the basis of common account that he could speculate on the nature of the synagogue.

For Worcestre's contemporaries, Bristol's own origins were in direct contrast to those of the hill-fort, a mysterious, savage place beyond the bounds of human settlement. Nonetheless, they were still intimately linked with the story of the giants and the demise. The late Saxon origins of Bristol were not universally accepted until the nineteenth century, and in the later Middle Ages were as unsuspected as they would have been unwelcomed: surely, one of England's greatest urban settlements must have originated in distant antiquity.

And so it did, at least according to the legendary history of Britain. Geoffrey of Monmouth's work provided the source for countless Medieval – and later – histories and romances. One class of medieval chronicle was even named Brut because all the works in this category begin with the Brutus story. Fourteenth-century English and Anglo-Norman Bruts, following Geoffrey, tell how two of Brut's descendents, the brothers Belinus and Brennius, divided up Britain between them: the elder, Belinus, got the lion's share, while Brennius had to settle for Scotland and the North of England. Brennius grew jealous of his brother and civil war ensued. Their mother eventually reconciled them by appearing between their two armies as they prepared for battle, bearing her bosom, and imploring Brennius: "Do not forget, my son, do not forget these breasts which gave you suck…" Suitably admonished, the brothers settled their differences and went off to conquer Rome. At this point the fourteenth-century Bruts diverge from Geoffrey of Monmouth's version, and have Brennius, who Geoffrey says stayed in Italy, return to Britain and then found Bristol.[74]

This fanciful story became part of what was essentially Bristol's official history, thanks to Robert Ricart.[75] The chronicle section of The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar begins with a shortened Brutus story before giving a detailed account of Brennius's foundation of Bristol. Brennius, we are told, "first founded and billed this worshipful Towne of Bristut that nowe is Bristowe". This broadly follows the fourteenth-century Bruts, but then Ricart adds, apparently from his own imagining, or following a local, otherwise unrecorded, tradition, "and set it vpon a litell hill, that is to say, bitwene Seint Nicholas yate, Seint Johnes yate, Seint Leonardes yate, and Newe yate".[76] The use of the four town gates, three of them named after saints, to locate Brennius's original foundation may simply be a convenient use of contemporary landmarks, but it could also be a deliberate attempt to suggest that Bristol had somehow always been Christian, even avant la lettre. In any case, the indication of a planned foundation, laid out logically along four streets, each with its own gate, presents a powerful impression of a rational, ordered and civilised community.

---

[74] *Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain*, 54-9.

[75] The story was not only believed in Bristol. In the 1430s the chronicler John Whethamstede dismissed the Brutus legend but accepted the reality of Brennius and Belinus, and the supposed arms of Belinus were quartered in the heraldry of Henry VII and Elizabeth: Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, 34-6. Geoffrey of Monmouth's Brennius was widely identified with Brennus the Gaul who Roman sources say captured Rome in 390 B. C. E.: ibid., 92-3.

[76] Ricart, *Kalendar*, pp. 8-10. For the 14th-century *Bruts*, see J. Taylor, "The French Prose *Brut:* Popular History in Fourteenth-Century England", in *England in the Fourteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), 247-54. I am indebted to Dr Julia Marvin for help with the Anglo-Norman *Brut.*

Brutus had founded London, called by him New Troy; Bellinus had founded London's Billingsgate. Now his younger brother had founded London's junior partner, Bristol.[77] Geoffrey of Monmouth makes no mention of Bristol; coming from South-East Wales, just across the Severn from Bristol, he would probably have recorded the story of the town's foundation by Brennius had it been current in his time.

The temptation is to assume that this story originated in Bristol, but no reference to it within the town has been found before Ricart's time.[78] If it was not part of Bristol's common civic culture then Ricart may have been alerted to its existence by William Worcestre. In September 1478 Worcestre was in Bodmin, visiting the Friars Minor; there, he evidently came upon a copy of the Anglo-Norman Brut – he calls it "ancient chronicles of the Britons in French" – and made the following note from it: "Bristol, otherwise called Bristuit, was founded by Brennus or Bran, Duke of the Britons, brother of King Belin of Britain,…"[79] He left Bodmin on 19 September and ten days later arrived in Bristol, where he stayed for three days, leaving on or after 2 October. Ricart began writing the Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar within the six months following the day of Worcestre's arrival in Bristol. The coincidence of dates is suggestive, albeit clearly not conclusive.

While no reference to Brennius in the Bristol records has been found before Ricart's inclusion of him in his Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, he was to have a long history of association with the town. When Henry VII paid his first visit to Bristol in 1486 he encountered a representation of Brennius, who greeted Henry as his "most dear cousin", continuing,

> I am right glad, ye be welcome to this land,
> Namely to this town, which I Brennius king,
> Once builded with her walls old,
> And called it Bristow in the beginning[80]

before complaining that when he founded Bristol it had been prosperous, but had lately suffered a decline in its trade and was consequently impoverished, and would remain so unless Henry came to its aid. Ricart was probably still town clerk at this time, and so would have had a major part in staging the festivities for Henry's entry: the reception by Brennius may have been his idea.[81] Brennius thus stands as the guarantor of Bristol's liberties.

Tudor Bristolians were ready to use their city's supposed great antiquity for political purposes. In 1582 Bristol claimed to the Royal Council that the port of

---

[77] For the popularity of the Galfridian Brutus myth, and in particular the supposed origins of London as "New Troy" among its later 14th-century citizens, see Sylvia Federico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2003), Chapter One, "Late-Fourteenth Century London as the New Troy', 1-28. Did Ricart know of the London books of statutes and ordinances that contained references to the city's foundation by Brutus: ibid.,151, n. 3? For the significance of such myths to later medieval urban culture, see Gervase Rosser, "Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town", *Urban History*, 23 (1996), 5-25.

[78] There was a Belinus Nansmoen of the parish of St Mary Redcliffe, who made his will in 1416 (it was proved in 1417), but judging by his family name he is very likely to have been born elsewhere, probably in Flanders: Wadley, *Wills*, 96-7.

[79] *William Worcestre, Itineraries*, ed. Harvey, 95.

[80] *REED, Bristol*, 10-14.

[81] Peter Fleming, "Processing Power: Performance, Politics, and Place in Early Tudor Bristol", in *Personalities and Perspectives of Fifteenth-Century England,* ed. A. Compton Reeves (Phoenix, Arizona: The Arizona Center for Medieval Studies, 2012), 141-68, at 155-9.

Gloucester should have the status of a creek – a subsidiary port – within the Bristol customs area, rather than be treated as an independent port in its own right, with its own customs administration. The men of Gloucester naturally objected. One of the arguments came down to the relative antiquity of the two cities. Against Gloucester's - correct -claim to have been founded by the Romans Bristol played its trump card: Gloucester was founded by the Emperor Claudius in AD 45, but Brennius the Briton founded Bristol way back in 3574 BC![82] Acceptance of the possibility of the Brennius foundation myth persisted in Bristol into the eighteenth century.[83]

Brennius and his brother still sit, either side of St John's Gate, on Broad Street, continuing to guard the city's liberties. While these statues may post-date the Reformation, they could be earlier, perhaps even erected in Ricart's lifetime. Worcestre, writing in 1480, does not mention them, which suggests that they were only erected later. They gaze out upon the Guildhall, the hub of medieval Bristol's civic life.[84]

The figure supplanted by Brennius as Bristol's special patron appears to have been William the Conqueror. At the start of Edward IV's first royal visit to Bristol in September 1461 he was met at Temple Gate by William, with these words:

> Welcome Edward, our son of high degree,
> many years hast thou been out of this land,
> I am your forefather, William of Normandy.
> to see thy welfare here through God's hand.[85]

From this and other evidence it seems that this substitution occurred at some point between this event and the compilation of The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar.

By persuading themselves of the truth of the Brennius foundation myth fifteenth-century Bristolians could not only believe that their town was of immense antiquity, but also that its origins associated it with the greatest imperial city in human history. As a

---

[82] TNA SP46/17/fo 68-70d, 73-77d, 83-87d. I am grateful to Evan Jones of the University of Bristol for this reference. The case was also recorded in Gloucester's Great Red Book: GA GBR/B/2/1, ff. 88-108 (the reference to Brennius is on f. 94d). The background to this dispute is fully explained in Evan Jones, *Inside the Illicit Economy: Reconstructing the Smugglers' Trade of Sixteenth Century Bristol* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 67-72.

[83] William Adams, in his *Bristol Chronicle* of 1625, recounts the Brennius and Bellinus story, but then dismisses it as "a foolish toy for the inhabitants of this noble ile to decive themselves…" (BRO 13748/4; for Adams, see below.); Andrew Hooke, *A Dissertation on the Antiquity of Bristol* (London: W. Owen, 1748), 50-2, is noncommittal on the subject, but inclined towards scepticism; Barrett, *History and Antiquities* (1789), 2-4, did not think Brennius merited any place in a serious historical discussion of Bristol's origins, but in the same year Edward Shiercliff, in *The Bristol and Hotwell Guide* (Bristol) recounted the story without comment, as did George Heath's *The New Bristol Guide*, ten years later; in the meantime, however, William Mathews thought the tale believable only "if we are disposed to credit the fables of Geoffrey of Monmouth and old monkish traditions" (*The New History, Survey and Description of the City and Suburbs of Bristol, or Complete Guide* (Bristol: W. Mathews, 1794), 23). Seyer, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 24, 54-7, doubted the veracity of the Brennius and Bellinus story; by 1861 George Pryce, *A Popular History of Bristol: Antiquarian, Topographical and Descriptive from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (Bristol: W. Mack), 5, rejected the story, while still believing Bristol to be of ancient British origin, but as late as 1877 Reid and Hicks, *Leading Events*, 5-6, include the story as something "Tradition had ascribed …" and stated that Brandon Hill was named after one of the brothers. Bristol's manuscript annalists tended to begin their histories with the building of the trench and new bridge in the 1240s, thereby sidestepping the Brennius story: Sweet, *Writing of Urban Histories,* 77n. 7.

[84] The statues were observed by Marmaduke Rawdon on a visit to Bristol in 1665: J. H. Bettey, *Bristol Observed: Visitors' Impressions of the City from Domesday to the Blitz* (Bristol: Redcliffe, 1986), 52.

[85] *REED Bristol*, 7-8; the presence above Temple Gate of "a greet Gyaunt delyueryng the keyes" to Edward may be a reference to the legend of the giant Ghyst.

descendant of Brutus, and through him Aeneas, Brennius could have claimed distant kinship with the founder of the Latins, the race who went on to build Rome.[86] This was quite a lineage for a place that, while among the largest and wealthiest in England, was neither a cathedral city nor a county town and was, by North Italian or Flemish standards, frankly second-division. These Trojan founding fathers inhabited a world that was almost unimaginably distant in time, but their descendants still walked the Bristol streets: they were keenly aware of their ancient ancestry; they had once been bitter enemies of the English; they spoke a strange language. They were the Welsh.

The mythical British History held that the Trojans in Britain became the Britons, and weathered the Roman occupation only to be driven westwards by the invading English. What was left to them became Wales. The myth of Trojan foundation had, after all, been conceived by Welshmen – the unknown author of the Historia Britonum and then Geoffrey of Monmouth – and their compatriots cherished the story. For the later medieval English this was an awkward, but inescapable, aspect of a myth that was too valuable to be rejected out of hand.[87] The equation of Welsh to Trojan out-lived the Middle Ages. In Shakespeare's Henry V, the Welsh character Fluellen is twice dismissed as a "base Troian" by the Englishman Pistol.[88] At least a fifth of fifteenth-century Bristol's population was made up of such "Trojans", or of those of Welsh descent.

The growth of antiquarian research in the sixteenth century brought forth another dimension to Bristol's mythical foundation story. John Leland, the pioneering antiquary who died in 1552, reinforced the notion of a British origin for Bristol. As well as repeating the story of Brennius' foundation of Bristol, in his Itinerary he suggested that "Bristol in early ages was probably called the city of Odera, and that Nante Badon, that is, the vale of Bath, was added to it, because Bath was but eleven miles distant from it".[89] Caeroder is indeed a Welsh exonym for Bristol, along with the more obvious Bryste, while yn nant Baddon, translated as "in the valley of Bath", meaning the valley of the Avon, was commonly appended.[90] In all likelihood, Leland learnt the name from one of Bristol's Welsh population. At least two Elizabethan antiquaries picked up Leland's attribution. One was the Welsh physician Humphrey Lhuyd (d. 1568); he passed the idea on to the Flemish cartographer Abraham Ortelius, who reproduced it in his Thesaurus geographicus of 1587.[91] The other was William Camden, who likewise glossed Bristol's Welsh name of Caer Odor yn nant Baddon as the city of Odera in the

[86] Virgil's *Aeneid* was unknown in 15th-century England, and the standard medieval sources for the Trojan story were Benoît de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie* of 1160 and Guido delle Colonne, *Historia destructionis Troiae* of 1287: Federico, *New Troy*, xvi.

[87] The myth of Britain's Trojan foundation was treated with suspicion by some English authors even before Polydore Vergil initiated the Humanist attack upon it that would eventually prove to be fatal, but it continued to be stoutly defended by Welsh writers into the 17th century: Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, 38-40, 83-98, 100-2.

[88] *Henry V*, V:1, ll. 2905, 2918.

[89] *The Itinerary of John Leland,* ed. Toulmin-Smith, pt. 3, 101; Seyer, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 53-4.

[90] *Caerodor* continued to be in common use as the Welsh name for Bristol until at least the early 20th century. See, for example, Welsh language books published in Bristol and bearing the imprint *Caerodor*, such as a work on agricultural techniques, *Amaethyddiaeth* by H. and T. Proctor (1858), editions of *Y Bibl Sanctaidd* in 1868 and 1873, and two of William Edwards' devotional works, *Llawlyfr annghydffurfiaeth Brotestannaith* (1903) and *Llawlyfr swper yr Arglwydd* (1904), both published by W. Croft Hemmons of Bristol.

[91] Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, 136; Barrett, *History and Antiquities of Bristol*, 4.

valley of Bath.[92] The city's Welsh name was alluded to in the dispute with Gloucester in 1582 as further proof of its ancient British/Trojan origins.

No reference to Bristol's Welsh name has been found before Leland. The full name presents certain problems. Caer usually refers to a Roman Castrum, fort, or Castra, fortified camp, and there is no indication of there having been such a place on the site now occupied by Bristol. Alternatively, caer might have been more loosely applied to Bristol behind its town walls, or to Bristol castle, and so dateable to no earlier than the eleventh century. Odor is the mutated form of godor, which in place names tends to signify a valley, ravine, or gorge. Thus, the element Caerodor could be translated as, "the city of the Avon Gorge".[93] Medieval Bristol was about two miles from the Gorge by land, and so the latter feature may not seem immediately obvious as a way of identifying the settlement. This objection invites speculation that the name may have originally denoted not Bristol itself, but a settlement elsewhere in the area that pre-dated its foundation, and, further, that this name was subsequently transferred to the new settlement known to the English as Bristol. Perhaps this was the Clifton hill fort inspected by Worcestre. Alternatively, it might have been applied to Sea Mills, identified with the Roman Abona, a naval station situated at an inlet in the Gorge where the river Trym joins the Avon. While by the tenth century Abona was probably deserted, although perhaps periodically re-occupied by military forces, its substantial Roman fortifications would still have been very apparent. Taking caer in its strictest sense, either of these features present better candidates than Bristol. The additional locating phrase, yn nant Baddon, identifies the Avon, and by extension Bristol, with reference to Bath, the lesser of the two settlements since at least, probably, the eleventh century. This element clearly postdates the Saxon settlement and renaming of Aquae Sulis as Bath, and so belongs to the period after the battle of Dyrham of 577. This still leaves the possibility that the full name originated between this date and the appearance of Bristol, a span of perhaps as much as three hundred years, after which it came to be transferred to the new settlement by the bridge over the Avon.[94]

However, there is a more prosaic, and perhaps more likely, explanation. Quite simply, most medieval travellers from Wales to Bristol arrived by water, entering the port by the Avon, and so had to navigate the Gorge. For them, Bristol might indeed have been the "City of the Gorge", since this was a very impressive feature encountered immediately before entering the port. Of course, this still leaves unanswered the question of why Bristol should have been identified by reference to its much smaller neighbour, Bath, and described as a caer when it did not strictly qualify as such, but these are probably insufficient grounds to reject this solution.

There was another association between Bristol and a supposed alternative Welsh name, and this can be found much earlier than Leland. Camden noted that in the "ancient catalogue of cities" Bristol was called Caer Brito, glossed as the city of the Britons.[95] This reference to Caer Brito takes us back to the ninth-century Historia Britonum. Here we find the source for Camden's "catalogue of cities", a list of the 28 "Cities of Britain", most, if not all, of which were probably situated in areas within, or

---

[92] William Camden, *Britannia sive florentissimorum regnorum Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniae et insularum adjacentium* (London, 1586), 109-10.

[93] I am grateful to Professor Helen Fulton of the University of York for help with interpreting Caer Odor yn nant Baddon.

[94] For post-Roman Abona, see David H. Higgins, "The Roman town of Abona and the Anglo-Saxon charters of Stoke Bishop of AD 969 and 984", *Bristol and Avon Archaeology*, 19 (2004), 75-86.

[95] *Britannia*, 109.

close to, regions still controlled by the Welsh in the ninth century. One of these is Cair Brithon, or Brithoc, depending on the manuscript variant.[96] Camden was not the first to assume that this referred to Bristol. In his twelfth-century chronicle Henry of Huntingdon includes the "Cities of Britain" list, and reproduces Cair Brithon/Brithoc as "Kair Bristou", making it identical with an Anglo-Norman spelling of Bristol. However, no evidence has been found that this connection was even assumed, still less exploited for polemic, in medieval Bristol itself.[97] Modern scholars prefer to identify Cair Brithon/Brithoc as Dumbarton.[98] If the Brennius foundation story had only been introduced to Bristol in the fifteenth century, then only after this could the polemical value of the town's Welsh/British names have been realised. This would in turn support the suggestion that it was Ricart, perhaps prompted by Worcestre, who introduced Bristolians to their fabulous ancient history.

The acceptance of Bristol as in some sense Welsh was an inevitable logical conclusion to be drawn from acceptance of the Brennius myth.[99] Quite possibly, Bristolians of Ricart and Worcestre's generation and later believed their town to have been, as well as English, also Trojan, Roman, and Welsh. After all, for those who accepted the Aeneas and Brutus stories these last three labels amounted to the same ethnic identity. The association of Bristol with Rome thus depended on an acceptance of its association with the Welsh. In other English towns this might have posed a problem for English residents but, as we shall see, this is unlikely to have been the case in Bristol.[100]

Bristol as a Trojan-Welsh-Roman town presents a stark contrast to the Saracen-Jewish-Giant hill fort on Clifton Down. The former represents civilisation and order; the latter barbarity and chaos. Brennius and his Trojans allowed Bristol a share in Rome's imperial grandeur and connected it with London's own foundation story. However, they

---

[96] *The "*Historia Brittonum*", Edited in the 10th Century by Mark the Hermit*, ed. W. Gunn (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1819), 3, 46, 96-7, 105; *Nennius's "History of the Britons"*, ed. A. W. Wade-Evans (London: Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1938), 114-6; *Nennius, British History and the Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris (London and Chichester: Phillimore, 1980), 40/80.

[97] Both Caerodor and Cair Brithon/Brithoc were believed by Camden to be alternative names for Bristol, but he doubted that they proved the town's British origins: *Britannia*, 109-10.

[98] In his 1819 edition of Historia Brittonum William Gunn identifies Cair Brithon, like Camden did, as Bristol, but Wade-Evans, in his 1938 edition, and John Morris, in his of 1980, prefer Dumbarton.

[99] But, given the strength of Bristol's Welsh population, and of its ties with Wales, it was probably already the case that many inhabitants of south-east Wales already regarded the town as in some sense "their" regional metropolis. This suggestion is supported by the case of Chester, at the other end of the Anglo-Welsh March, which was an English town of which the North Welsh felt some share of ownership: Helen Fulton, "The Outside Within: Medieval Chester and North Wales as a Social Space", in *Mapping the Medieval City*, ed. Catherine A. M. Clarke (Wales UP, 2011), 149-68, at 151-6.

[100] Bristol's "British" origin story lived on long after the sixteenth century. Despite the fact that Bishop Gibson had identified Bristol's Saxon name "Bricgstow" as meaning "the place by the bridge" (an opinion now generally accepted), in his 1692 edition of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle ("*Regulae generales ad investigandas origines nominum locorum*", 3, and "*Nominum locorum quae in chronico Saxonico memorantur explicatio*", 16, in *Chronicum Saxonicum ex MSS codicibus nunc primum integrum editit ac Latinum fecit,* ed. Edmund Gibson (Oxford, 1692)), an identification that strongly suggests English, rather than British, origins, Bristol's British, pre-Roman origin is presented as a compelling hypothesis in Barrett, History and Antiquities of Bristol (1789), 4. A generation later, Seyer, while doubting, on balance, the details of the Brennius story, still gives credence to the notion of a British foundation. He does, however, discuss the etymology of Bricgstow as the place of the bridge, but only as one among a number of possible origins: *Memoires*, vol. 1, 52-9, 205-9. In 1881, Nichols and Tayor, in their *Bristol Past and Present*, Vol. 1, 52-9, 276-9, rehearse these previous theories but only to reject them, in favour of what is basically the accepted modern account of a late Saxon foundation.

also had a crucial weakness. Like the Saracens, like the Jews, and like the giants, they were pagans. Brutus fulfilled his destiny as Britain's founder only after receiving a vision from the goddess Diana.[101] If Apollo could count Worcestre's Jews among his devotees, then the Trojans, it had to be acknowledged, were also among that company. While they had not actively rejected the Christian God, as had the Saracens and Jews, since they lived centuries before the Incarnation, and so were a "better class of pagan", they remained pagans nonetheless. They could not supply Bristol with a Christian foundation myth.

Bristol's Holy Origins

Bristol is notable among large English towns and cities for the scarcity of its holy associations. Bristol did not have a widely-recognised patron saint, and nor did it possess a major pilgrimage centre. Doubtless the explanation for this lack is to be found, in whole or in part, in the town's situation between two dioceses: lacking a cathedral, and hence not enjoying the benefits of being a centre of ecclesiastical administration, it never generated the sort of religious community and culture that normally sustained shrines and saints' cults. Of course, this is not to say that medieval Bristol did not have a rich ecclesiastical culture, or that its laity were not as pious as their counterparts anywhere else. Nor was Bristol completely lacking in associations with religious foundation myths.

Shortly after Ricart's account in his Kalendar of Bristol's foundation by Brennius comes a section in Latin devoted to Joseph of Arimathea's foundation of the church at Glastonbury.[102] Ricart's source for this appears to have been a text displayed at Glastonbury Abbey for the instruction of Latinate pilgrims. Glastonbury is about 25 miles south of Bristol, but it is in the diocese of Bath and Wells, which also included Bristol's transpontine suburbs of Redcliffe and Temple. This was probably thought to be sufficient justification for the inclusion of the story in Ricart's civic chronicle. Why Ricart should have been so keen to associate his town with Joseph is explained by the significance of the Joseph story both in the mythical history of English Christianity and by its contemporary political context.

Joseph's supposed role as the founder of British Christianity, of the island's first Christian church at Glastonbury, and as custodian of the Holy Grail, was already well-established by Ricart's time. The definitive version of this tale was contained in John of Glastonbury's Cronica, written around 1400 at the behest of Abbot John Chinnock. Ricart's text appears to have been influenced by this account. For Chinnock the legend supported his claim to primacy among English abbots. Joseph also allowed the English to claim primacy among Catholic Christians. English delegates to the great church councils used the story to press their claims for primacy over the French. Christianity in England had been founded by a contemporary of Christ; it only came later to France. The importance of the diocese of Bath and Wells as both Christianity's point of entry to Britain, and as a direct, personal connection to Christ, is conveyed in a speech made in 1417 by a member of the English delegation to the Council of Constance, Thomas Polton, at that time Dean of York. After describing Joseph's arrival in South-West Britain with

[101] *Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain*, 20/1.

[102] For Bristol's associations with the Joseph of Arimathea myth, see Peter Fleming, "Making History: Culture, Politics, and *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*", in *Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Douglas L. Biggs, Sharon D. Michalove and A. Compton Reeves (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 289-316, at 294-6, on which the following discussion is based.

his twelve companions and subsequent conversion of the locals, he relates how the British king:

> …bestowed twelve hides of land and the diocese of Bath upon them for their support. They are now, it is written, buried in the monastery of Glastonbury, in the diocese of Bath, and the same monastery has from of old possessed the endowment of the said twelve hides.

Thus, Brennius and Joseph connected Bristol with Britain/England's two foundation myths, one secular, the other religious.

Bristol north of the Avon, in the diocese of Worcester, had its own religious foundation story, albeit one that was of far more limited significance. This concerned Saint Jordan.[103] Jordan is supposed to have been one of the companions of St Augustine of Canterbury, despatched from Rome by Pope Gregory I to convert the pagan English and the Celtic Christian British to Catholic Christianity. Their encounter with the leaders of the British church, dated by Bede to 603, is traditionally held to have taken place near Bristol, possibly on what is now College Green, part of the pre-Dissolution precinct of St Augustine's Abbey; this possibility is supported by Bede's description of the location as being called by the English, "Augustine's Oak", on the borders of the Hwicce and the West Saxons, that is, in that border area where Bristol would later develop. Indeed, the parish church of St Augustine the Less and the adjoining abbey may have been located and dedicated partly, at least, in recognition of the area's existing association with the missionary saint. St Augustine's the Less was built on a site occupied by a church since at least the eleventh century. While canons of the twelfth-century abbey followed the Victorine version of the rule established by St Augustine of Hippo, their church was dedicated to St Jordan's master, St Augustine of Canterbury.[104] Jordan was believed to have been buried on the Green, and by the 1390s he was being referred to locally as a saint. The earliest documentary record of St Jordan occurs in the 1393 will of Agnes Spelly of Bristol, who left a bequest to "John, hermit of the chapel of St Jordan". The earliest association of St Jordan with St Augustine comes from a Book of Hours of 1450, which belonged to an unidentified Bristol man and contains a hymn to the saint, beginning:

> Ad honorem dei et sancti Jordani
> O felix christi confessor concivis caeli Jordane
> Sis pro fide intercessor nostre gentis anglicane
> Quam in fide perfecisti Augustino baptizante
> Cui consors extitisti ipso anglis predicante.
> Huius loci sis patronus in quo iaces tumulatus ...[105]

---

[103] Unless otherwise stated, the following is based on: David Higgins, *Saint Jordan of Bristol: From the Catacombs of Rome to College Green at Bristol*, Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 120 (Bristol, 2007); idem, "A sculptural tribute to St Jordan of Bristol", TBGAS, 127 (2009), 213-32; The Cartulary of St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol, ed. David Walker, *Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, Gloucestershire Record Series, 10 (Bristol, 1998), xviii-xx.

[104] Joseph H. Bettey, "St Augustine's Abbey", in *Bristol Cathedral: History and Architecture*, ed. John Rogan (ed.), (Tempus, Stroud, 2000), 15-37, at 15-6.

[105] "To the Honour of God and of St Jordan: O Jordan, blessed confessor of Christ and citizen of Heaven, intercede for us by virtue of the faith we of the English church profess, whom Augustine [first] baptised and you perfected in that holy trust, whose colleague (alt. companion) you were in his preaching to the English. Be our Patron [saint] in this place where you lie entombed." Higgins's translation. The prayer is followed by a collect which refers to, "all who have devotedly visited the tomb of Thy confessor Jordan within this oratory chapel".

From the 1480s we have the first evidence for the location of St Jordan's Chapel and an adjoining open-air pulpit on the Green. Alms and oblations were being given to St Jordan until the eve of the Henrician Reformation. A free stone cross stood next to the pulpit until the mid-1530s: in 1560 a witness in a Star Chamber case remembered how, twenty-six years previously, this cross was removed to a nearby house.[106] After the Reformation the building was used as a school, and was probably demolished in the early eighteenth century.

While none of this direct evidence pre-dates the 1390s, there is an indication of a local cult of St Jordan that was contemporary with the foundation of church and abbey. "Jordan" as a personal name was uncommon in medieval England, except in eleventh and twelfth-century Bristol, where it is found relatively frequently as a Christian name. One of Robert fitz Harding's brothers and a grandson were so-named, as were two members of the related de la Warre family.[107] That four members of Robert's wider family circle should have been called Jordan is almost certainly no coincidence. Robert fitz Harding, first Lord Berkeley of the second creation, was founder of St Augustine's Abbey, in his lordship of Bilswick, which also encompassed the Green where St Jordan is supposed to have been buried and where stood his chapel. The name of Robert's brother, Jordan fitz Harding, suggests that the saint's cult existed in Bristol, and enjoyed the patronage of the locally powerful family of Harding, from at least the early twelfth century.[108] Bristolians continued to name their sons after St Jordan into the fifteenth century.[109]

Clearly, St Jordan's tomb was the object of veneration in pre-Reformation Bristol, and a significant number of Bristolians were in some sense devotees. He might have been thought, by the English, to have been an appropriate local saint for a town so close to the Welsh border and with such a large Welsh minority population, given his supposed role in bringing together English and Welsh – on English/papal terms, of course. However, the extent to which he was regarded as a truly Bristolian, rather than a specifically Berkeley, or north Bristol, saint, is uncertain. His tomb and chapel stood in the Berkeley lordship of Bilswick between the Berkley foundations of St Augustine's Abbey and St Mark's Hospital. His name is not known to have been attached to any other location in Bristol, and there is no reference to him in Ricart's Kalendar; he does not seem to have featured in civic ceremony.

Through Joseph of Arimathea Bristol, or at least its suburb south of the Avon, was able to associate itself with the foundations of British Christianity; through St Jordan, Bristol, or at least, the area north of the town walls within the Berkeley lordship of Bilswick, could make the link with the founder of English Catholic Christianity. Joseph and Jordan share a Mediterranean origin, as did Brennius's Trojan ancestors. They connected Bristol with the Holy Land, Rome and Troy, and provided a set of

---

[106] TNA STAC 5/514/26, deposition of Walter Gleson.

[107] Roger Price and Michael Ponsford et al., *St Bartholomew's Hospital, Bristol: The Excavation of a Medieval Hospital, 1976-8*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report, 110 (CBA, York, 1998), 20-23; *The Cartulary of St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol*, ed. David Walker, BGAS, vol. 10 (Bristol, 1998), xviii-xx. Walker is rather more sceptical about the historicity of Jordan than Higgins.

[108] Robert B. Patterson, "Robert fitz Harding (d. 1171)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9597, [accessed 19 August 2012]).

[109] Jordans are found in a number of 14th-century deeds, e.g. BRO 5163/75, 79, 114, P. ST MR/5163/105, 109, 138-41. Jordan Sprynge was a Bristol merchant active from the 1420s to the 1450s: *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus Wilson, nos 58, 83-5, 115, 136-7.

foundation stories that avoided any imputation that the town might have had a native, English, and prosaic origin. A similar consequence attached to our final foundation myth.

The Berkeley's Danish Origins

This relates to the Lords Berkeley themselves. As we know, Robert was the son of Harding, and the grandson of Eadnoth, both rare examples of Englishmen whose careers flourished after the Norman Conquest.[110] So, not only did the ancestors of the Berkeleys not come over with the Conqueror, but they actually originated from among the conquered. However, just as Bristol's English origins were obscured, so an alternative foundation myth enabled the inconvenient fact of the Berkeleys' native ancestry to be ignored. Abbot Newland's Roll, produced in 1489/90 under John Newland, abbot of St Augustine's Abbey, for William, marquess of Berkeley, begins with the claim that Robert's father, Harding, 'was son of the King of Denmark', and goes on to explain how he came to Bristol:

> The kyng of denemarke had a secunde son namyd Herding which hesend vn to king william Conqueror. Vn to whom this king WilliamConqueror gave grete riches and send him to Bristowe ther to inhabite.The yere of our lord mlxix. The cause of his coming in to this lande of Englande was this. As hit is wreten in Policronicon Ther was some tymeAn ordinance made in Denemarke, that if so the kinge of ther lande hadEny mo Sonnes then on, then shulde the eldist Son and Eyre remaynew[i]t[hi]n the lande, And the yonger brethren shulde be send w[i]t[h] a Substance of goodis in to othir landis, and ther to leve in evoydyng all inconuenient of debatis that myght chaunce atwixe them with in theire owne lande. And for this cause this Herding a Secunde Son of the Kinge of Denemarke was send in to this lande as hit is afore Wreten.[111]

The Danes had ruled England from 1016 to 1042, and Scandinavian influence over the Danelaw in Eastern England lasted much longer, so fitz Harding's supposed Danish royal ancestry would not have seemed inherently unlikely. However, in light of Robert Ricart's equation of the Conqueror's Danish ancestors with Saracens, the choice of these particular royals might still strike us as eccentric. Perhaps "Harding" did not sound like a Norman name, and, given the Norman's Scandinavian ancestry, his origins among Danish royalty seemed like a reasonable supposition. The Danish origin story may have been the product of a consciously fraudulent rewriting of family history on the part of Newland or Berkeley, or it may have been a family tradition, passed down through the generations and believed to be true. In any case, the claim was to be repeated elsewhere, this time in stone. The Latin inscription running above the central arch of the abbey gatehouse, whose upper storeys form one of the survivals from Abbot Newland's building programme, repeats the assertion that Robert fitz Harding, who with Henry II jointly founded the Abbey, was descended from the King of Denmark: Rex henricus secundus et dominus Robertus filius herdyngi filij regis dacie huius monasterij primi fundatores extiterunt.[112]

---

[110] *Cartulary of St Augustine's Abbey*, ed. Walker, xi; Patterson, "Robert fitz Harding (d. 1171)".

[111] *Berkeley Castle Muniments*, SR 97; Gloucestershire Archives, D471/Z5. This text is not found in the paper copy at Berkeley Castle (SR 98). The citing of Ranulph Higden's Polychronicon may suggest the influence of John Trevisa, who translated the chronicle in the fourteenth century.

[112] The gatehouse has been restored at least twice, so caution is required before assuming that all of its features are original: Julian M. Luxford, "The Late Medieval Abbey: Patronage, Buildings and Images", in *Medieval Art, Architecture and History of Bristol Cathedral*, ed. Jon Cannon and Beth Williamson

Ignorant of their town's Saxon origins, fifteenth-century Bristolians believed it to have originated in truly ancient times, and to have been associated with the foundations of Britain, of Christianity in the island, and of the English church. Such beliefs would have swelled civic pride, as well as the dynastic pride of the local magnate, and might also have been to the advantage of the town's large Welsh population. These stories were also useful for the purposes of political rhetoric and polemic. These useful myths were relatively easy to negotiate. What we would call Bristol's "real" history was much less tractable.

(Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 216-46, at 238-40; Catherine Oakes, "Romanesque Architecture and Sculpture", in *Bristol Cathedral: History and Architecture*, ed. John Rogan (Stroud: Tempus, 2000), 64-87, at 85-6; Andrew Foyle, *Bristol* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2004), 206.

Chapter Two: The Uses of History

The previous chapter suggested how fifteenth-century Bristolians saw their town's distant history in terms that were both colourful and almost if not entirely fictitious. Clearly the line drawn in the twenty-first century between 'myth' and 'history' would not have been recognised by them in the same way, but we must draw it, and having done so must ask ourselves what sense they had of the history, as opposed to mythology, of their town, and how and why they made use of that history.

The Mair of Bristowe is Kalendar

In the Prologue to the *Kalendar* we are told that,

> this noble and worshipfull Toune off Bristowe is ... founded andgrounded upon fraunchises, libertees, and free auncient customes,and not vpon comen lawe, as it is affermed and ratefied bi oure oldechartres, in as free and semblable wise as is the Citee of London ...as tyme oute of mynde it hath be graunted bi the noble progenitoursof oure moost dradde souveraigne lorde the kinge, and by his goodgrace confermed vnto the saide worshipfull Toune in so large wise,that for to shewe or express it in certeyn it passith mannes mynde to remember it

Consequently, Mayor William Spencer, et omnium discretorium virorum dicti majoris consultorum, that is, Bristol's Common Council, had commissioned the work, 'in maynteyneng of the said fraunchises herafter more duely and freely to be executed and excercised, and the perfaitter had in remembraunce'.[113] In other words, Bristol's liberties and special constitutional position rest on a series of charters, some granted from 'tyme oute of mynde', that is, beyond the limit of legal memory, taken as Richard I's coronation in 1189.[114] While immediately after his accession Edward IV had confirmed and extended Bristol's liberties, relations between the town and the king had turned sour in 1470-1, and Spencer and his colleagues had good reason to anticipate that those liberties might one day have to be defended. By the 1470s memory alone could not be relied upon, and so the stated ambition for the Kalendar was that it would provide a means whereby the liberties contained in the town's charters could more readily be identified.[115] The first three sections of the Kalendar are taken up with the Chronicle. They are followed by three more sections, and these were evidently intended to achieve this ambition. The first of these rehearses, 'the laudable costumes of this worshipfull Towne, and ... the eleccion, charge, rule, and demenyng of thonourable Maire, Shiref, Baillifs, and othir officers of the same Towne in thexecuting and guidyng of theire said offices during theire yeres', and gives both a detailed account of the procedures for the appointment of civic officers, and a summary of the civic ceremonial calendar.[116] Ricart promises that the next section will be a calendar of the town's charters, liberties and customs, 'And in whate places, bokes, and levis the premises and euery of them may be

[113] Ricart, Kalendar, 2-3.
[114] M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, (2nd edn., Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 42, 152. This formal limit of legal memory was sometimes referred to by Bristol plaintiffs, such as Thomas Marshall, the vicar of All Saints', who in 1433 claimed that his church had been seised of a contested rent since the time of King John: BRO P.AS/D/LM/N/7.
[115] For chronicles supplying the place of imperfect memory, see Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), 57-64.
[116] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 69.

founde with a wete fynger'.[117] As such, it would have supplied the need identified in Spencer's commission quite precisely, but this is not what was actually produced. Instead, we have the text of the confirmation of the 1373 charters, and a table of clauses from Prince John's charter. The final section opens with the statement that since, 'this worshipfull Toune of Bristowe hath alweis vsed comenly to execute his fraunchisez and libertees according in semblable wise as the noble Citee of London hath vsed, and a grete parte hath take his president of the said Citee in exerciseng the same', it was fitting to include a transcript of a London custumal, and so this is done. Ricart asserts that this text is based on one that had belonged to Henry Darcy, whom he describes as recorder of London under Edward III; in fact, Darcy was mayor, holding office in 1338/9. The text in this section is very similar to, but not identical with, London's Liber Albus, written in 1419 by John Carpenter, the city's common clerk.[118] Together these three sections provide a great deal of valuable material, but they fall short of Spencer's stated aim. Still lacking was a comprehensive finding aid to the civic archive.

By now this archive had become voluminous. The earliest Bristol custumal of which there is evidence, the Constituciones Ville Bristolle, was probably produced in the early thirteenth century, and is extant as an early fourteenth-century copy.[119] In 1344, in the same year that Bristol's government was reformed and a Common Council introduced, the recorder, William de Colford, ordered the production of what is now known as the Little Red Book (so-called from the colour of its leather binding), to record the town's ordinances, customs and liberties. Over time this volume became both the official civic memoranda book and the repository of a miscellaneous collection of copies of other, unrelated, documents.[120] Among the ordinances found in the Little Red Book was one of 1344 ordering copies of all wills of burgesses in which lands, tenements or rents were bequeathed to be kept in the civic treasury; similarly, one of the 1373 charters stipulated that the same should happen with deeds relating to Bristol property, in both instances with the stated aim that such collections should form a secure, definitive and accessible record. The Great Red Book probably came into being between 1373 and 1376, as a repository for these deeds, but it too came to take on the character of a general miscellany, receiving an increasing number of ordinances and other civic documents, probably as a result of the Little Red Book running out of space around the middle of the fifteenth century. [121] In addition, the fourteenth century saw the appearance of the Great Orphan Book and Book of Wills, containing the indentures concerning arrangements for the wardship of their children's inheritances and wills of Bristol burgesses who died leaving an under-age heir.[122] In 1381 it was resolved to

---

[117] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 5.

[118] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 6; *Calendar of the Letter Books of the City of London: Letter Book F*, ed. R. R. Sharpe (London: privately printed, 1904), 285; *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber Albus, Liber Custumarum et Liber Horn, pt. 2*, ed. H. T. Riley (RS, London, 1860); T. Brewer, *Memoir of the Life and Times of John Carpenter, Town Clerk of London in the Reign of Henry V and Henry VI, and Founder of the City of London School* (London: Arthur Taylor, 1856), 17-22.

[119] Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 405, ff. 236b-239a, discussed in *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 11 n. 5, 76. See also, Mary Bateson, *Borough Customs*, Selden Soc., 18, 21 (1904, 1906), I, Introduction, xx and passim. For Bristol's medieval archive, see *Bristol Charters, 1155-37*, xix-xxii; *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 10-14; N. Dermot Harding, "The Archives of the Corporation of Bristol", *TBGAS*, 68 (1926), 227-249, at 227-32.

[120] *LRBB*, vol. 1, ix-x, 24-5.

[121] Cronne, *Bristol Charters*, 12; *GRBB, Text, pt.* I, 1-3. The coincidence of dates in 1344 and 1373 between bureaucratic re-organisation and innovations in record-keeping was probably not accidental: see Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 62-8 for the relationship between record-keeping and bureaucracy.

[122] Wadley, *Wills*, 1-4.

provide a secure place, under lock and key, for the preservation of the civic archive, and henceforth, until the reign of Henry VIII, this was supplied by a wooden chest in the Guildhall.[123] The increase in the number of extant documents after 1381 is testimony to the effectiveness of this provision, and for its necessity. By the fifteenth century the two Red Books were in simultaneous use, and their functional distinctiveness was being lost, while a large number of legal records and charters were loose and uncollected within the Guildhall chest.

Thus, for over two centuries before the production of the Kalendar there had been developing in Bristol a bureaucratic culture based on written records. During this period text had trounced memory as the accepted means of proving title, privilege and liberty, so that proof in the absence of written record was in many cases all but impossible.[124] What was apparent to Mayor Spencer was that an archive was powerful because, potentially at least, it gave access to the past as a defence in the present, but only if it were accessible. By the 1470s this growth in record-keeping had evidently outpaced the civic bureaucrats' ability to navigate efficiently within the archive: to find something the stewards, chamberlains or town clerk had either to leaf through the substantial Red Books, wherein material appeared according to no very obvious organisational scheme, or rummage through the ever-growing collections of bundles and loose documents in the chest in the Guildhall. Despite Spencer's best intentions, the Kalendar as it was eventually produced could not have solved this problem.

So what of the Chronicle, occupying the first three sections of the Kalendar: was this also seen as part of the same effort to defend civic liberties, and if so, how? The Kalendar's Prologue offers two statements relating to this question. First, it declares that the Chronicle is supposed to show how:

> …this worshipfull Toune hath be enlarged, fraunchised, and corporated,by whate kinges daies, and by whoos sute and coste. The laboure, peyne,and travaille of the saide sewtours Almighty God rewarde them in hevyn,for al we ar bounde to pray for the same.[125]

The declared intention here is that the Chronicle is to act like a bede-roll, so that those who read the work would be reminded to pray for past champions of the town's liberties. This in turn would encourage those readers in their efforts, since their sacrifices would be remembered by subsequent generations in the same way, and so ease their souls' paths through Purgatory.

Next, the Prologue asserts that the Chronicle's inclusion is justified:

> For asmoche as it is righte convenient and according to euery Bourgeis of the Towne of Bristowe, in especiall thoo that been men of worship,for to knowe and vnderstande the begynnyng and first foundacion ofthe saide worshipfull Toune.[126]

Perhaps there is a sense here that a proper awareness of Bristol's ancient and glorious origins would naturally sharpen the local patriotism of the burgesses and, in particular,

---

[123] *LRBB*, vol. 1, 110-11. An indenture of 1434 provided that a bequest "in cista comuni Sancti Georgii [in the Guildhall] ... sub quatuor ceruris imponentur...": ibid., 175.

[124] Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 162-72: civic bureaucratic practice was influenced by royal archives and the practices of central and local government, but here settled archival practices took a surprisingly long time to develop, and kings were certainly not immune to the problems of navigation within the archives experienced by Bristol's civic leaders.

[125] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 4.

[126] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 8.

the mayors and common councillors, and thereby make them keener in their defence of the town's liberties. In both passages, the stated intention is that by imparting knowledge and understanding of Bristol's history to each generation of civic governors they should be encouraged to be more assiduous on their town's behalf. The study of History is most certainly not an idle entertainment. In this, the Kalendar was very much in line with later-medieval justifications for chronicle-writing.[127]

However, just as with the stated ambition that the final sections of the Kalendar would provide a finding aid, essentially a catalogue, to the civic archive, the Chronicle as produced also falls far short of what was intended. Ricart drew upon a range of historical works in compiling the Chronicle. He tells us that the pre-Conquest section was drawn from a Brut. As we have seen, his account of Joseph of Arimathea seems to have derived from Glastonbury Abbey. From textual evidence it would appear that the rest of the Chronicle was drawn from a number of different sources. Among these was a brief account of English kings in Latin couplets; a set of Notabilia diversa, also in Latin and mainly referring to events in ecclesiastical history, probably also derived from Glastonbury Abbey; the thirteenth-century Flores historiarum of Matthew Paris; the Chronica de fundatoribus et de fundatione Ecclesie Theokusburie, written in Tewkesbury Abbey between 1450 and 1476; and, probably, a Latin chronicle of the Lords Berkeley and of their foundation of St Augustine's Abbey, in which place it was probably written, and was possibly related to a Latin original from which Abbot Newland's Roll was produced in 1490/1. For the section from 1216 Ricart turned to at least one of the London Chronicles as his main source. What is striking is how little these various sources have to say about Bristol. The Brut, Flores, and the London Chronicle are concerned with the history of England as a whole, often as seen through metropolitan eyes. The Notabilia and the Tewkesbury Chronicle are mainly concerned with ecclesiastical matters, although Ricart mainly uses the latter for an account of the earls of Gloucester, and their foundation of not only Tewkesbury Abbey but also of Bristol Castle, Bristol's St James's Priory and Keynsham Abbey. Even the Berkeley/St Augustine's chronicle has little to say about Bristol. Between the account of Brennius's mythical foundation of Bristol and the year 1216 there is virtually no reference to the town.

The format of the Chronicle changes considerably after the entry for the year 1216. Until this year, following the Flores historiarum, the entries are divided by the year of grace; afterwards, following the practice of the London chronicles, they appear under mayoral years. The elite of later medieval London kept registers of their mayors' terms of office from 1189, when the mayoralty was instigated. Over time these registers became annals, chronicles of events recorded against each mayoral year, and then chronicles, more developed histories, but organised by the civic year and with a strong London bias.[128] From 1216/7 Ricart's Chronicle follows this practice, beginning with Bristol's first mayor, Adam le Page. In this year we are told of Henry III's coronation at Gloucester and how 'he came to Bristowe and hilde there his grete Counseile in maner of a Parlement'. However, over a period of more than two centuries after 1217 local references continue to be few and scant. In 1232/3 the death of the abbot of Keynsham is noted, but with one exception there is nothing else of local interest until the 1440s. Not even the granting of the charters of 1373 is mentioned, although the text of the

[127] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 57, 65-81.

[128] The most recent account of the London Chronicles and their development is Mary-Rose McLaren, *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), particularly 15-48.

confirmation of the charters itself is reproduced later in the Kalendar. The single exception comes under the year 1239/40, when there is a relatively fulsome description of the building of the new channel for the Frome, which mentions the pressure exerted by Henry III on the men of Redcliffe to co-operate with their neighbours across the Avon, as well as the grant of land by St Augustine's Abbey through which the channel would be cut, "As appereth by olde writynge therof made bitwene the forseid Maire and Cominaltee and the seid Abbot and Covent".

Once a steady rhythm of local events develops after 1440 we find recorded royal entries into Bristol, as well as local instances of bad weather, and their consequences, high grain prices and the loss of shipping. Civic improvements, such as the paving of roads and redecoration of the High Cross, also merit mention. These are interspersed with national events, gleaned from one or more London chronicles. Clearly, in the Chronicle as in its later sections, the Kalendar fails to do what was required of it by the mayor and common council.

From the perspective of a modern historian, it might at first seem inconceivable that Ricart, the town clerk, with ready access to the civic archive, should have made so little use of this to provide him with his primary sources for the construction of a history of Bristol, but Ricart was not a modern historian. He lived four centuries before Leopold von Ranke, the pioneer of modern, 'scientific', archivally-based historical writing. While it is possible that Mayor Spencer had an inkling that history could be produced by archival research, it might be thought anachronistic and unreasonable to expect a provincial town clerk to anticipate modern historiography in this way.[129] The typical medieval chronicler stood on the shoulders, if not of giants, then certainly of his predecessors, using previous chronicles to provide the bulk of his work, with only the final sections comprising new material. That new material covered the period within the memory of the chronicler and of his informants, and was provided by eye-witness testimony or reportage. Original documents might be used, but usually as verbatim transcripts, inserted into the text, rather than as the raw materials from which a narrative could be constructed.[130] With few exceptions, Ricart's access to the past of his town seems to have been limited to the period within his own memory: about forty years. Thus, the initial impression is that the sections following on from the 1440s were constructed from recollections: his own, and those of his informants, but this is not the whole story.

Ricart's is the earliest extant manuscript of a Bristol chronicle before Adams's chronicles of 1623 and 1625, and so it might at first be assumed that Ricart was a lone pioneer of Bristol historiography, and that the chronicle he began was the single thread by which the town's local history was preserved until Adams.[131] However, Ricart's was not the only medieval Bristol chronicle. In the early sixteenth century the antiquary John Leland copied extracts from what he described as "a little Boke of the Antiquities of the Howse of Calendaries in Brightstow". The reverse of the paper copy of Abbot Newland's Roll, produced after 1515, contains a list of Bristol mayors and civic officers

[129] But, the Coventry Leet Book appears to have been reorganised by a scribe with some notion of "archival research": *The Coventry Leet Book, or Mayor's Register, Containing the Records of the City Court Leet or View of Frankpledge, A.D. 1420-1555*, ed. Mary Dormer Harris, Early English Text Society, 146 (1913), xv-xvi, Appendix A, 845-6.

[130] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 1-20.

[131] For the 1623 chronicle see *Adams's Chronicle of Bristol* ed. Francis F. Fox & E. Salisbury (Bristol, 1910); the 1625 chronicle is unpublished, and is BRO 13748/4.

from 1373 to 1524, with some sparse annotations of national and local events. [132] Both of these, and one of the sources used by Adams, were closely related to Ricart's chronicle, but not identical to it; therefore their sources cannot simply be later redactions of Ricart, but must depend to some degree on another chronicle. [133] They may not be our only witnesses to that lost chronicle or chronicles.

As Rosemary Sweet has observed, between Adams, writing in the first half of the seventeenth century, and Samuel Seyer, working from the end of the eighteenth century, Bristol had the most vibrant tradition of urban chronicle writing of any English city.[134] There are around twenty Bristol chronicle manuscripts extant from this period.[135] They tend to begin in 1216, with Bristol's first mayor, and to continue into the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. They are all written in English. Given that Adams preserved elements of a chronicle tradition independent, but related, to Ricart's work, it is worth exploring these later annals to see if they can shed more light on Bristol's medieval chronicles.

This is not a straightforward undertaking. The later annals' provenance is in many cases obscure, and only very rarely do they give any indication of their sources. They contain a great deal of shared material for the period from the thirteenth to the early sixteenth centuries, much, but not all, of this shared with Ricart, with minor variations of phrasing. Before we can reasonably assume that this "non-Ricart" material came from another medieval Bristol chronicle or chronicles, we must first ascertain if any of it could plausibly have been derived from sources that would have been available to post-medieval writers compiling Bristol annals. In any cases where such sources can be discounted, it would follow that the material is likely to have been derived from at least one lost medieval Bristol chronicle.

Our task is made easier by the diligence of Samuel Seyer, who copied those Bristol annals that were available to him. He began in 1790, with eleven annals, including one version of Adams, that he compiled into a composite annal, carefully identifying and comparing each one, and also cross referencing these with Ricart. In 1799 he copied a further three.[136] Of the annals he saw, Seyer judged the Haythorne Annal to be the best, not excluding Adams's Chronicle. The Haythorne Annal finishes in 1669, the earliest end-date of any of those extracted by Seyer with the exception of Adams; it may, therefore, be among the oldest. It was lent to Seyer by a Mr Haythorne, hence the name given to it by Seyer. Seyer was a critical and astute historian. Unlike his contemporary, William Barrett, he was not misled by Thomas Chatterton's medieval fantasies, and this is apparent from his compilation: against one account of the building of Bristol Bridge in 1240/1247 he noted that he had discounted a description of the opening of the Bridge which Chatterton had published as supposedly contemporary testimony.

In a few instances these texts indicate their sources. Notable instances of this include Haythorne, which refers to Grafton's Chronicle for the marriage of the Earl of

---

[132] J. H. Jeayes, "Abbot Newland's Roll of the Abbots of St. Augustine's Abbey, Bristol", *TBGAS*, 14 (1889-90), 117-30.

[133] *The Itinerary of John Leland in or About the Years 1535-1543*, ed. L. T. Smith (London, G. Bell & sons, 1910), part x, 91; the anonymous review of the 1910 edition of Adams's Chronicle, *TBGAS*, 33 (1910), 140-2, is a valuable discussion of his sources.

[134] Rosemary Sweet, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 76-8.

[135] Two others, in addition to Adams', have been edited in A. E. Hudd, "Two Bristol Calendars", *TBGAS*, 19 (1894-5), 105-41.

[136] BCL, 10164.

Barre to Eleanor, daughter of Edward I in Bristol in 1293, and another, which uses the thirteenth-century Chronicle of Thomas Wykes for the detail that Edward I spent Christmas at Bristol in 1284.[137] While a third draws upon Lewis, Complete History of the Several Translations of the Holy Bible (1731), for Wycliffe's prebend of Aust at Westbury College in 1375.[138] However, such citations are exceptional. Adams was rather more assiduous in this regard than his later counterparts, and at the beginning of his 1625 Chronicle he cites as among his sources An Epitome of Cronicles Conteining the Whole Discourse of the Histories … by Thomas Lanquet (d. 1549), the first edition of which was published in 1549, with a second edition, with continuations to the later sixteenth century, produced by Thomas Cooper, bishop of Winchester (d. 1594).[139] In discussing the period 1237 to 1264 Adams mentions three books, "each of them differed in sundry places", one by Phillip Jenkins, described as a Bristol coroner, one by Thomas Kedgwin, and the other anonymous; Kedgwin is referred to on a number of occasions as an authority.[140] Jenkins was Adams's contemporary. Thomas Kedgwin was a lawyer in the Middle Temple in the 1590s and the son and heir of Christopher Kedgwin, a grocer, alderman and mayor of Bristol, who was active from the 1570s and who died between 1619 and 1627.[141] These three works were evidently manuscript Bristol annals, now lost. Adams also refers to a work composed by "Lloid and Powell"; this was probably the Historie of Cambria, written by the Welsh antiquary, Humphrey Lhuyd, with augmentations and corrections by another Welsh antiquary, David Powel (d. 1598), and published in London in 1584.[142]

Other sources of information are occasionally given. Under the year 1431 the Haythorne annalist tells us that John Wellys, Lord Mayor of London, gave Bristol a fine civic sword, and the annalist had himself read the inscription on the hilt that recorded this gift.[143] In 1443, we are told, a brass post was set up on the Key near the conduit, and presumably this event might likewise have been recorded on the object itself. Elsewhere, the authority for events recounted is given as common repute: this is the case for the 1399 executions of Scrope and his associates, and Thomas Rowley's benefactions to St John the Baptist's church in 1475. [144]

As with Ricart, with the exception of the documents relating to the construction of the new Frome channel in the 1240s, there is no evidence of any systematic use of the

---

[137] Wykes' Chronicle was published in Thomas Gale's *Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores Quinque* (Oxford: Sheldon, 1687), and this incident is in vol. 3, 112.

[138] John Lewis, *A Complete History of the Several Translations of the Holy Bible, and New Testament, into English, Both in MS. and in Print; and of the Most Remarkable Editions of them since the Invention of Printing* (1st edn 1731, second edition, 1739), 34,

[139] Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, 41; *Adams's 1625 Chronicle*, MS BRO 13748 (4) f. 1.

[140] Adams, *Chronicle*, 25.

[141] *Minutes of Parliament of the Middle Temple, 1501-1703*, ed. C. T. Martin, 3 vols. (London: Butterworth & co, 1904-5), vol. 1, 364: William, son of William Vawer, merchant of Bristol (and alderman, and as such colleague of Christopher Kedgwin), at the instance of Mr Snigge, a master of the bench (presumably the later Sir George Snigge, Bristol recorder and baron of the Exchequer in 1605: Adams, *Chronicle,* 178), bound as apprentice with Thomas Kedgwin and Charles Townley, May 1596; Christopher Kedgwin a witness to a Bristol deed in 1576: BRO P.AS/D/BS/B/18; a feoffee of All Saints' church, 1619, BRO P.AS/D/BS/C/7; Adams, *Chronicle,* 138, 178 for his shrievalty and mayoralty; will of William Kedgwin, merchant of London, son of Chrisopher, 1627/8, TNA PROB/11/155; will of John, grandson of Christopher, 1638, PROB/11/177. *Register of Admissions to the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple,* ed. H.A.C. Sturgess (London, Butterworth & co, 1949), 74.

[142] Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, 87, 136.

[143] For this sword, still among the city's civic treasures, and its inscription, see Mary E. Williams, *Civic Treasures of Bristol* (City of Bristol, 1984), 44-5.

[144] BCL, 10164, Haythorne Annal.

civic or national archive by Bristol annalists. The annalists also tend to share with Ricart an exceptional focus on the civil engineering works of the 1240s. While particular details may be debatable, the overall impression given by the annalists' accounts of this work are convincing, and enough of this material is missing from Ricart to add weight to the suggestion of an independent source.[145]

There are further indications that the annals drew upon lost medieval chronicles. Under the year 1284 the Haythorne Annal records:

> This yeere King Edward kept his Christmas at Bristol with much content;& the next he kept at Exeter with much mourning; where Alfred Duport the late Mayor of the said town & four more were hanged for the death of Walter Leathlate, because the south gate was left open that night, & the murtherer escaped.[146]

Another annal, lent to Seyer by George Martin and finishing in 1777, adds, under the year 1285:

> This year the King came to Bristol, & restored to the Citizens their charter, which they had forfeited by encroaching upon the rights of the constable of the Castle.[147]

Seyer appends his own note, transcribed from the Latin of Thomas Wykes's Chronicle, which he took from Gale's Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores Quinque of 1687, remarking that some believed that Edward also held a parliament at Bristol during his stay. Wykes makes no mention of any restoration of the town charter.[148]

Both entries refer to the same visit, that made to Bristol by Edward I between 21 December 1284 and 2 January 1285.[149] The patent and close rolls give some context for the remarks in the Martin Annal. In June 1285 commissioners were appointed to assess a fine of £500 for the contempt that the community of Bristol had committed against the king; the following month another fine was assessed on four Bristolians who had been exempted from the earlier fine. By November 1287 these fines, totalling over £600, had been collected and paid into the Exchequer by the castle constable, Peter de la Mare.[150] In writing of this episode, Seyer was entirely dependent on the annals and Wykes; in 1909 Latimer could now draw upon the published calendars of patent and close rolls, but did not use another account of the incident, contained in the Annales de Dunstaplia, published in 1866, which relates how, during Edward's visit to Bristol in the Christmas season of 1284-5:

> …burgenses civitatis, qui super quibusdam articulis implacitabantconstabularium castri, succumbebant ; et supposerunt se et sua gratiae domini regis, pro eo quod illis libertatibus contra regni consuetudinem usi erant.[151]

This supports the claim made by the Martin Annal. While this Annal dates from no earlier than 1777, neither Seyer nor Latimer cited any extant source from which this detail could have been derived, and so the probability is that it drew upon a lost earlier

---

[145] Appendix One.
[146] BCL, 10164, Haythorne Annal.
[147] BCL, 9075,
[148] "Chronicon Thomae Wykes", in *Annales Monastici*, vol. IV, ed. H. R. Luard (London: RS, 1869), 300.
[149] *CPR, 1284-5*, 146-52, 200-1.
[150] *CPR, 1284-5*, 178, 184; *CCR, 1279-88*, 496.
[151] J. Latimer, *Calendar of the Charters etc of the City and County of Bristol* (Bristol, W. C. Hemmons, 1909), 38-9; "Annales de Dunstaplia", in *Annales Monastici*, vol. III, ed. H. R. Luard (London: RS, 1866), 316.

chronicle. The Martin Annal and the Haythorne Annal claim that Bristol paid a fine of £400 in 1304/5, linking this to the 1304 tallage, and this might be a confused reference to the 1285 fine. While the Haythorne Annal's description of Edward's visit to Bristol is represented in a positive, and so misleading, light, it seems to be based upon another lost local source, drawn upon for events in Exeter the following year. This incident seems to relate to the murder of a cathedral precentor.[152] Such a notorious episode could well have found its way into a contemporary Bristol chronicle.

The Clayfield Annal, written in 1735 and lent to Seyer by Edward Rolle Clayfield, recounts the following story under the year 1398:

> K' Richard the second caused a Theater to be built at Bristow for a combateTo be fought between two Scotts, the one Esqr. appellant, & the other a Knight defendant. The Appellant was overcome & hanged.[153]

Richard II divided his time between Bristol and Bath between 17 and 23 March in 1398, but the only other reference found to this obscure episode comes from Leland's de rebus Britannicis collectanea, whose first edition, edited by Thomas Hearne, appeared in 1716:

> Duellum designatum a rege Bristolliae inter Anglum e Scottum, sed cum pugna instaret Anglius caussae renuntiavit, unde tractus & suspensus est

Leland took this from a manuscript in the library of Magdalen College Oxford.[154] While the writer of the Clayfield Annal could have seen Leland's account, even if he did this is unlikely to have been his only source. For one thing, the two versions are not identical. The nationality of one of the combatants differs between the two, and there are details in the Clayfield Annal missing from Leland. On the first discrepancy Leland should probably be trusted over Clayfield, since what is being described is a judicial duel, a formal procedure usually employed for the purpose of deciding an issue between two parties from hostile countries, for whom the normal courts of law could not offer a remedy.[155] Once again, the balance of probability is that the annal account derives from a local, medieval chronicler.

Coming into the period covered by the main series of local references in Ricart's Kalendar, that is, from the 1440s onwards, the annals provide further evidence for Bristol's putative lost medieval chronicle tradition. Adams's and a number of other annals note that in 1456/7, in the words of Haythorne, "…Queene Margaret came to Bristol with a greate traine of the Nobility, & was honourably rec[eived] & entertained". No other authority for this visit has been found, but given the political situation of the time, it makes perfect sense for Margaret to have made a show of strength in what would soon emerge as a leading centre of Yorkist support.

---

[152] M. Prestwich, *Edward I* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1997), 256, and Decima I. Douie, *Archbishop Pecham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 302-4.
[153] BCL, 10164.
[154] N. Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1997), 473; *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii de rebus Britannicis collectanea*, ed. T. Hearne (1770 edn., London), vol. 3, 384.
[155] M. H. Keen, *The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto and London, 1965), 40-44; M. Vale, "Aristocratic Violence: Trial by Battle in the Later Middle Ages", in *Violence in Medieval Society*, ed. R. W. Kaeuper (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), 159-82; J. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (London: Beacon Press/Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1971), 114-7.

Similarly, a number of annals, including Adams's, record that in 1473, "The Earl of Oxford was imprisoned in Newgate at Bristol". The Lancastrian die-hard John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, together with his brothers and a small band of followers, established a bridge head on St Michael's Mount in Cornwall before surrendering in February 1474. He was carried in triumph to Edward IV and then imprisoned at Hammes castle. Neither Warkworth, our main narrative source, nor the Parliament Rolls, our main record source, make any mention of a sojourn in Bristol gaol, but this would be entirely plausible as the Lancastrian prisoners were brought north out of Cornwall.[156]

In the light of this evidence, it looks almost certain that Ricart's was not the only Bristol chronicle. Quite possibly, Bristol followed the London pattern, with mayoral registers, kept, perhaps, from the time of the first mayor of 1216/7, soon being annotated with brief notices of events in each mayoral year, and from this practice there could have developed a tradition of local chronicles.[157] While a mayoral register was probably kept by the town clerk, on behalf of the mayor and common council, the chronicles were kept by members of the burgess class, for their own purposes and interests. They would have been subject to a process of repeated copying and editing, as well as translating, from, perhaps, Anglo-Norman to Middle English, and then into Modern English, until the end of the eighteenth century. This manuscript tradition was brought to an end by the appearance of printed histories of Bristol, beginning with Barrett and Seyer, the products of a systematic, "professional" historical methodology, supplementing the chronicle tradition with archival and, increasingly, archaeological research.

At each redaction there were opportunities for adding material, but also for editing. The extant annals, from Adams onwards, brought the story up to date, or at least to a date close to that of their composition, but they could also supplement earlier sections with material drawn from published sources. In addition, not all of the earlier material would have been copied: the more remote it became, so also the less intelligible or important more of it would have seemed, and so would have been omitted. There was also more room for misunderstanding, of course. This is a natural, inevitable process, and one not necessarily subject to conscious shaping.

This was not all that was going on, however. Noticeable throughout the manuscript tradition is the downplaying, if not outright omission, of episodes that would not have redounded to Bristol's credit. Hence, Edward I's confiscation of Bristol's charters is only referred to obliquely; more tellingly, the great rebellion against his son, lasting from 1313 to 1316, one of the most dramatic episodes in the town's history, is completely absent, while the factionalism and shifts of loyalty among the Bristol elite during the Wars of the Roses are barely detectable. The result is an account that is largely celebratory, portraying the town, for the most part, as a loyal, prosperous and successful place. The vitality of this tradition during the eighteenth century, as a manifestation of "Bristol pride" is therefore unsurprising.

---

[156] Cora L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward IV* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1923), vol. 2, 8-9; *A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of Edward IV* (1461-74), ed. J.O. Halliwell, Camden Soc., Old Series, 10 (1839), 26-7; *PROME,* Edward IV, October 1472,(Third Roll, running from June 1474 to March 1475).

[157] This was a process comparable with that of the *Liber pontificalis* as well, of course, of the London chronicles: *The Lives of the Ninth-Century Popes (Liber pontificalis)*, ed. Raymond Davis (Liverpool UP, 1995); McLaren, *London Chronicles*, 15-25.

Until 1478 this manuscript tradition was in the hands of private individuals: members of the civic elite, burgesses, aldermen and lawyers. Before the mayoralty of William Spencer there was no official civic chronicle, and he sought to remedy this omission by commissioning the town clerk, Robert Ricart, to produce one. Spencer's intention was to produce a continuous narrative of Bristol's history from its origins to his own time, but this was unrealistic, even if Ricart had been able to gain access to all of the privately-owned town chronicles in circulation, which evidently he did not. The result was a chronicle that, until the 1440s, had little to say about Bristol. From that decade on it was much more focused on the town, but this section was probably a copy of one of the existing chronicles, rather than Ricart's original composition.

How should we judge Ricart? Undoubtedly he failed in his commission, but was failure inevitable? In attempting to answer this question we need to understand the precise nature of his role, and to get some idea of his biography. According to the Kalendar's Prologue, Ricart was to "devise, ordeigne, and make" the book. To judge by Ricart's signatures in the Great Red Book, he was not the scribe. The hand in which the Chronicle entries is written appears to change in 1508, but by then Ricart was probably long dead, since he had been replaced as town clerk by Thomas Harding back in 1489.[158] The Kalendar continued in use as a register of events until 1698, when the last Chronicle entry was made. Of Ricart himself we know very little, beyond the dates of his term of office as town clerk, 1478 to 1489, and that he was probably a Bristol merchant.[159] From the evidence of the Kalendar he was no intellectual lightweight. For Ricart to have identified, collected and ordered the Kalendar's various sources, even if he did not actually transcribe them (and there is no reason to suppose that he did not), he needed a good reading knowledge of Latin and French. In addition to the Guildhall's archives, he probably also used chronicles or related materials from the abbeys of Glastonbury, Tewkesbury and, possibly, St Augustine's (and if not there, then Berkeley Castle), along with at least one Brut, London Chronicle, and a copy of Flores historiarum.[160]

Despite his evident scholarly ability and energy, Ricart the historian was unable to go beyond his chronicle sources. Even his description of the cutting of the new Frome channel was probably taken from another chronicle, despite his reference to the texts of the original charters relating to this work. For him, and for the general run of his contemporaries, archives existed to serve an administrative, rather than a scholarly need. They gave access to the past, but only for the narrow purpose of proving a particular legal precedent. Perhaps this is shown most eloquently by Ricart's treatment of the granting of the charters of 1373: this episode is missing from the Chronicle, presumably because his narrative sources did not mention it, but the text of the confirmation of these charters, issued in 1373, is included in a later section, doubtless copied from the original in the Guildhall chest.

While the Chronicle does not contain a description of the granting of the 1373 charters, there is still a reference to the event, for at this point in the manuscript is a depiction of Bristol's first sheriff, whose office was established by the Charter. This is one of a number of illustrations found throughout the Kalendar.[161] They are not by the

[158] Great Red Book of Bristol, BRO 04719, ff. 28 and 29; Lee, "Political Communication", Appendix One.
[159] Fleming, "Making History", 307-8; Clive Burgess, "Ricart, Robert (fl. 1478)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23473 [accessed 26 Aug 2012]).
[160] Fleming, "Making History", 308.
[161] Fleming, "Making History", 304-6; K. L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts, 1390-1490*, vol. 2 (London: Harvey Miller, 1996), 348-50.

same artist, and some were added as part of the continuation of the work into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

There are eighteen fifteenth-century illustrations. In addition to the first sheriff, flanked by two sergeants, there is a three-quarter elevation view of Bristol, a full-page depiction of the mayor-making ceremony, and a portrayal of the Annunciation and Adoration of the Holy Infant.[162] The remaining thirteen illustrations depict kings, mostly shown in half-page, and each ushering in the account of that king's reign or, from 1216, accompanying the first mayoral year of the reign. Half-page spaces have been left blank at the beginning of the reigns of Henry IV, Edward IV and Henry VII, suggesting that illustrations were intended, but never executed. No space is left for a portrait of Richard III, and the heading for his reign is cramped, as though it had been added as an afterthought.

These illustrations, most of which were executed by professional artists, must have cost a great deal of money. They were not intended simply for public display, since the volume was produced as a working document for the sole use of the mayor and common council. The Prologue's aspiration that the Chronicle would record the liberties granted to Bristol "by whate kinges daies", may help to explain why the images of kings, at least, were thought necessary. These are likely to have functioned as mnemonics. Each king is depicted differently: William Rufus, for example, is shown grasping the arrow that killed him; both Henry I and John are seated, and hold sceptres, but the former wears a sumptuous ermine-lined robe and is clean shaven, while the latter is bearded, and wears a plainer robe but with an elaborate collar; Henry VI, the work of a different artist, holds a downturned sword, perhaps to symbolise the illegitimacy of his rule in Yorkist eyes, if not his eventual tragic fate. The use of illustrations in manuscripts as aide memoire was well established; they served to remind the reader of important points in the text, and the more memorable the image the better the chances of their being effective.[163]

Of the thirteen depictions of kings, only two take up an entire page. Of these, one shows William the Conqueror in full fifteenth-century armour, mounted at the head of an army, and the other shows Henry III's coronation by a cardinal. Ricart naturally had a keen appreciation of William's part in national history, and used his reign as the point of division between two sections in the Kalendar, but his special treatment probably relates to his earlier role as Bristol's patron.[164] In Part Two we have four sections not drawn from the Flores historiarum: three are concerned with men who might fairly have been considered as having had a crucial part in Bristol's rise to prominence. These are: the Earls of Gloucester, builders of Bristol Castle and of St James's Priory; Robert fitz Harding, founder of St Augustine's, and the house of Berkeley; and King John, who through his charter to the town as Count of Mortain was, "one that moost freest and moost largiest enfraunchised this worshipfull Toune".[165] The fourth is William the Conqueror. No reason is given for his inclusion in this company. Was the original plan to honour him within the Kalendar as Bristol's special patron, until the Brennius

[162] This last appears immediately above the invocation to God the Father, Christ and the Virgin that opens the work, whose purpose was probably similar to that of the invocation in Wells's "Constitutional Statement" of 1437; according to David Gary Shaw, *Creation of a Community: The City of Wells in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), 179, "in a sense, these supreme powers were being called to witness, guarantee, and oversee the burgesses' sincerity and the aptness of their regime".
[163] Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 172-7, 283-93.
[164] See above.
[165] Fleming, "Making History", 298-9.

foundation story came to light? Once it did, then the William story could have been suppressed in favour of Brennius, although not without leaving textual and pictorial traces. Brennius would have been preferred over William because he could be more exclusively associated with Bristol, and he linked the town with an antiquity that was far greater than that provided by the Norman dynasty, even if traced back to their Scandinavian forbears, and far more prestigious.

The prominence given to Henry III might be explained by the great council that was held in his name at Bristol shortly after his coronation at Gloucester, and this is referred to in the Chronicle.[166] However, this alone seems of insufficient importance to justify his special treatment. Was his image commissioned in the belief that the coronation took place in Bristol, and by the time the error was spotted it was too late? This would be in accord with the general relationship between illustrations and text in the Kalendar. The reasoning behind the choice of subjects for depiction is unclear. To give another example: King John is not given privileged pictorial treatment, despite the special place he occupies in Ricart's text. There are thus two disjunctions in the Kalendar: one between the declared intentions for the work and what Ricart actually produced, the other between text and illustration scheme.

Ricart himself is unlikely to have been entrusted with commissioning the artwork for the Kalendar: such a decision, carrying significant financial implications, would almost certainly have been in the hands of the mayor and common council. Quite possibly, the illustration scheme was decided upon and commissioned before Ricart produced his text, and therefore without the benefit of his researches, and before his inability to meet the unrealistic ambitions of the commissioners was revealed.

None of the individual elements within the Kalendar were unprecedented as products of English provincial civic culture in the fifteenth century: customals, precedent books, and even town chronicles were produced by, for example, Coventry and Colchester.[167] What was novel was the way in which the Kalendar assembled these various types of document in one place with the aim of defending local liberties. The perceived need for such defensive action may have grown out of contemporary political realities; we shall probably never know for sure from where the inspiration behind its resolution came from, but one possibility does suggest itself.

Waterford's Great Charter Roll was compiled around 1373, and consists of fifteen original charters and seventeen illustrations sewn together to form a four metre-long roll.[168] The intention behind its production was to assemble evidence for presentation to the Chancery in Westminster as part of the dispute between Waterford and New Ross that began in 1215 and did not end until 1518. The roll contains documents that span the whole period of the dispute from its beginnings until 1372. The illustrations depict five English kings from Henry II to Edward III, who is shown twice (Richard I and Edward II are missing), together with seven justiciars of Ireland, a judge, and William of Windsor, Lord Lieutenant, Governor and Keeper of Ireland at the time of the roll's production; in addition, there is one panel depicting the mayors of Dublin, Waterford,

---

[166] Kate Norgate, *The Minority of Henry the Third* (London: Macmillan, 1912), 9-10. The council is noted in Leland's transcript of the annals he found in the house of the Kalends (*The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. Toulmin-Smith, pt X, 92).

[167] Gervase Rosser, "Urban Culture and the Church, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 335-69, at 345-6.

[168] This paragraph is based on *Waterford Treasures: A Guide to the Historical and Archaeological Treasures of Waterford City*, ed. Eamonn McEneaney and Rosemary Ryan (Waterford: Waterford Museum of Treasures, 2004), 58-79. I would like to thank Dr Tim Bowly for bringing the Waterford Great Charter Roll to my attention.

Cork and Limerick. Finally, at the top of the roll is a portrayal of Waterford itself. The whole ensemble was clearly designed to impress, and to carry subtle messages about the loyalty and strategic importance of Waterford that went beyond the straightforward legal points made by the individual charters.

While the Waterford Roll was designed as a weapon in one particular dispute, unlike the Kalendar, it is still a collection of historic documents combined with illustrations of kings and officials intended to help defend civic privileges; as such, its composition and intended function were very similar to the Kalendar's, and both include views of their respective towns. Given Bristol's close links with Waterford, it is quite possible that the roll came to mind when consideration was being given to the best format to adopt for what became the Kalendar. The evidence of a Chancery case from the reign of Richard III in which the executors of the Bristol-Irish merchant Walter Lincoll were accused of detaining a copy of Edward IV's charter of liberties to Waterford, demonstrates that some Bristolians were familiar, if anything a little too familiar, with the city's civic archive.[169]

Other Civic uses of History

The purpose of the Kalendar was intended to be both practical – as a finding aid – and exhortatory, in that the example of Bristol's glorious past as related in the Chronicle would, it was hoped, inspire its readers to defend their community's liberties with greater enthusiasm, in the knowledge that their efforts would be remembered and their souls prayed for. A positive view of Bristol's past is often achieved simply by omission: the terse entries omit uncomfortable episodes, but these are not always completely ignored. There are occasional hints of controversy, such as the entry for 1447/8:

> This yere the Kyng came ayen to Bristowe, and this yere the Bailiffs of Bristowe brought into the comen cofers C marcs sterlinges to the vse of the Chambre, a yenst theyre wylle, for they were cohartyd thereto by the counseile; whiche money as it was saide was stole fro a vicory of Alhallowen.[170]

What is actually going on here is unclear, probably deliberately so. Why was the money required? Was there a link between the royal visit and the appropriation of the money? Why were the bailiffs unhappy to be called upon to collecting this sum, and what were the circumstances of its alleged theft from the vicar of All Saints?

For William Canynges's final mayoralty of 1466/7 we have an entry that looks like mere gossip about a powerful local individual, but which probably relates to wider political issues:

> This yere the saide William Canynges Maire shulde haue be married, by theKyng our souerain lords commaundement as it was saide. Wherefore theSaid Canynges gave vp the worlde, and in al haste toke ordirs vpon hym Of the gode Bisshope of Worcestre called Carpynter, and was made preest and sange his furst masse at Our Lady of Redeclif the yere folouyng …[171]

In both of these entries the characteristic terseness, leaving no opportunity for explicit authorial judgement or comment, might also be seen as defensive: Ricart is not led into

[169] TNA C1/65/215.
[170] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 40.
[171] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 44.

potentially dangerous territory. For 1455/6, however, there is explicit authorial judgement:

> This yere certain Iressh burgeises of Bristowe began a sewte a yenstthe Maire and the Counseile byfore my lorde Chaunceler, with subpenas and prevy sealis, of the whiche Iresshe men one Harry Maywas vaunt parlour and chief labourer; for the whiche he and al hisfelowes were discomenyd of theyre freedom, til they bought it ayenwith the blodde of theyre purses, and with weping Ien, knelyng ontheir knees, besought the Maire and his brothern of their grace.[172]

This account constructs a simple morality tale out of what was in reality a complex legal dispute. We are not told why the Irish brought the suit, merely that they were defeated and humiliated by the triumphant Mayor and Common Council; in fact, the outcome was by no means as one-sided as it is here made to appear.[173]

Such a colourful narrative has parallels elsewhere in Bristol's civic archives. The Great Red Book contains a very long account (running to thirty-six pages in Veale's edition) of the proceedings resulting from an accusation of treason made by Thomas Norton against the mayor, William Spencer, in March 1479.[174] This begins with these words:

> Here followeth a Remembraunce Nevir to be put in oblyvion but to be hadde in perpetuell memory of all the trewe Burgeises and lovers of theTowne of Bristowe of the Innaturall demeaning and the Inordinate behaving of Thomas Norton of Bristowe Gentleman against the noblefamouse and trewe merchaunte William Spencer …

There then follows a vivid description of the circumstances in which the accusation was made. Spencer was sitting as judge in the mayor's court in 'the counter' when Norton and two associates entered. Norton wanted to speak with Spencer 'in a more Secrete house', but none was available, so Spencer asked him to sit next to him, which he did,

> …and saide secretly I must speke haynouse words and therefore I wold fayne be in a more secrete place But sith it may not be I shall shewe it here And there with the said Thomas Norton stode up and toke oute ofa Boxe a writynge sealid and a Right glove thereto annexed And shewed it unto the said Maire and Shreef and as Softely and Secretly as he coude devise with right a base voice he Redde the Said wrytinge …

Norton then read his accusation that Spencer was guilty 'of haute Treason' against the king, and challenged him to single combat, 'and this to perfourme I cast to the my glove connexid to this appele written with myne hande And with the seale of myne Armes ensealed'. Spencer's response was exemplary. The next morning, having consulted with the common council, he gave himself up to the sheriff, requiring that he be conveyed to the town gaol. The sheriff and councillors, "…with wepinge eyes and sorowfull hertis in Righte Pituouse and hevy maner yave theire lamentable assentes thereunto mornyng as sonnes seeng theire naturell fader in perill adventeur and jeopardy..". The narrative continues, with the same combination of colourful, circumstantial detail, and direct speech, not to mention emotionally charged hyperbole, interspersed with transcripts and paraphrases of documents related to the case, until we learn that the king completely exonerated Spencer and ordered his release and restoration. Upon receiving the king's letters conveying this news, the common councillors and civic officers, "with

---

[172] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 41.

[173] Peter Fleming, "Telling Tales of Oligarchy in the Late Medieval Town", in *The Fifteenth Century, 2: Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England*, ed. Michael Hicks (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), 178-93, at 182-4.

[174] *GRBB, Text, Part IV*, 57-93.

thousands of people in the moost gladde and joifull maner that coude be devised" went to free Spencer from gaol, whereupon the letters were openly read,

> …to the grete consolacioun of all the people it heryng For the whiche they all in theire moost humble wise lyftyng up theire handes to hevyn with watry eyen for joy yave unto almighty god herty thankinges And unto the Kinges Magiestee Roiall as grete laude and preysinges as enny trewe subgiettis coude devise to yeve unto theire Naturell and souveraigne lorde Bisechinge Almighty god that he and his Roiall issue moughte perpetually Reigne on theym theire heires and successours…[175]

The matter did not end there, however. The king ordered the mayor and common council to proceed against Norton and to punish him as they saw fit, but the final note in this story records that as of 29 September 1479 Norton had avoided coming to Bristol, and so evaded justice, "Of whose disobbeisaunces And other mishavynges the … Recorder enfourmyd the Kinges grace at Estehamstede and it is like that convenient Remedy will thereupon be purveyed". From this it is apparent that the account of this affair was written into the Great Red Book soon afterwards, that is, while Norton was yet to be brought to justice, and all in one stint, since the section occupies consecutive folios, in a continuous narrative with no unrelated matter interspersed. The reverse of this section's final folio is left blank, and is followed by an entry that dates to 1482, suggesting that space was left for the narrative to be continued, which it never was.

While the accounts of these two episodes vary greatly in length, they share a similar rhetorical approach to narrative. This is not surprising, since as town clerk in 1479 Ricart would have been responsible both for updating the Great Red Book, as well as for beginning the Kalendar, and of course, he reported to the mayor, William Spencer. There is nothing else that matches either account's use of colourful, subjective authorial comment in the Kalendar or either of the Red Books, but much later, in 1518, the treatment of another challenge to the mayor's authority displays a similar rhetorical approach.

In this year the sheriff, William Dale, complained to Star Chamber that the expenses he was expected to bear as a consequence of his office were unreasonable. While his argument was not accepted, Chancellor Wolsey nonetheless ordered that the expenditure required of the shrieval office be renegotiated. The case was recorded in some detail in the civic archive. The record mainly took the form of transcripts of Dale's bill of complaint and the mayor's answer, together with associated schedules of expenses, but there was also a section of narrative.[176] This related Dale's appearance before Wolsey, together with, "many evyll disposed persons of thaffinytie of the forenamed Wyllyam Dale confedrators with hym to sett division in the said Towne and to menteign hym in his symple opynyon and sedicous purpose…", and told how Dale, allegedly on Wolsey's orders, returned with all speed to Bristol's Council House, where he, "in right obedyent maner with watery teres submitted hymself to the due Ordre and establishementes which then and there were made…".[177]

This account comes from The Great White Book of Bristol, in many ways an extension of the Red Books, begun in or soon after 1496. The volume evidently owes its existence to the perceived need to record another challenge to the authority of the mayor and common council, this one made in that year by St Augustine's Abbey. This is done extensively, over thirty-six folios. While the record consists entirely of transcripts

[175] *GRBB, Text, Part IV*, 73-4.
[176] *GWBB*, 72-86.
[177] *GWBB*, 81.

of documents relating to the legal arguments put before the Council in Star Chamber, the selection and arrangement of material can easily create the impression that the dispute's resolution was a much more clear-cut victory for the town than is likely to have been the case.[178]

The entry that follows the Norton case in the Great Red Book is another example of a text that supplements the straightforward recoding of events or documents with rhetorical narrative. This concerns a failed accusation made in 1482 against William Bird (mayor in 1475/6), to the effect that he was unfree, "a bonde man borne and of bond byrth". This begins, "Here foloweth a Remembraunce nevir to be putt in oblivion but to be had in perpetuell memorie for a president and ensample to all persones that here aftir shall be sklaunderosly and wrongfully noysed or spoken of in their absens otherwise than it wil or darre be spoken in their presence"[179] While this account lacks the dramatic elements found in the cases of May, Norton and Dale, like them it presents its story as, essentially, a morality tale. As with the May and Norton accounts, we are told that this story of a triumph of good over evil is included as a precedent that should never be forgotten. Thus, what begins life as reportage is intended to serve later generations as history.

The intended readership for these accounts is likely to have been made up of burgesses, and particularly common councillors, since it is only they who would have had access to these books. Significantly, May, Norton and Dale were all from this class: these are tales of dissention within the burgess class, not of challenges from below (the identity and status of Bird's accusers is not revealed). The lesson, then, appears to be that burgesses should show class solidarity, and be dutiful and obedient to the mayor. The dramatic images conjured up by the accounts of the May, Norton and Dale cases are likely to have helped to make them more memorable. While, in the case of Norton and Dale, the inclusion of legal documents quoted in extensu would have served to support the claim that such events actually occurred as reported, it is the colourful vignettes, the sobbing recalcitrants shown the error of their ways, or the thousands of loyal townsfolk rejoicing at Spencer's acquittal, that lodge in the memory. Thus, as well, doubtless, as giving scope to medieval writers' love of hyperbole, such details also serve the mnemonic purpose that was of such importance to the civic tradition, not only of chronicle-writing, but also of record-keeping. In these instances at least, the written word's function is conceived of as essentially secondary to that of memory, which it is intended to support.

Mayor Spencer's hope that the Kalendar would be a useful weapon in defence of civic privilege is reflected elsewhere in fifteenth and early sixteenth-century Bristol. In the fifteenth century a series of charters granted to the community of Redcliffe was copied into The Little Red Book in an apparent effort to substantiate the legal basis for Redcliffe's incorporation into Bristol.[180] In 1488 Bristol's water bailiff, Thomas Hoggekyns, requested that the records of the Chamber be searched for references to the powers and responsibilities of his office, and the results were noted in The Great Red Book.[181] 1507/8 a clause from one of Edward III's 1373 charters was produced to justify the mayor in raising tallage and in chastising disobedient burgesses, and in the same year the mayor ordered the town clerk and learned counsel to search the town charters

[178] *GWBB*, 17-67; Peter Fleming, "Conflict and Urban Government in Later Medieval England: St Augustine's Abbey and Bristol", *Urban History*, 27 (2000), 325-43.
[179] *GRBB, Text, Part IV*, 93.
[180] *LRBB*, vol. 1, 22-3.
[181] *GRBB, Text, Part IV*, 123-4.

to find the legal basis for preventing the impending visit of royal justices. Such recourse to historical documents continued long after our period: in 1598 Christopher Kedgwin was among those common councillors commissioned to search through all city acts and ordinances to determine which of them should remain in force and be copied into one volume for the mayor's use.[182]

History and Bristol's Ecclesiastical Communities

The birth of Bristol's civic archive post-dated ecclesiastical record-keeping in the town. This is entirely predictable, given that for most of the Middle Ages writing was the preserve of the clergy. While the Dissolution swept away all but a handful of the materials once held in the archives and libraries of the town's religious houses, a number of important examples of parish records have survived.[183] Among these, exceptionally, are three fifteenth-century "Church Books", for the parishes of All Saints, St Ewen, and St John the Baptist. Typically, these contain inventories of church goods, ordinances, lists of benefactors, churchwardens' accounts, and memoranda concerning chantries and church property.[184] Dr Clive Burgess's work on the All Saints book has revealed that much of the basic motivation behind its compilation was shared with The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar.[185] The All Saints' Church Book reached essentially its present state in the 1480s, but most of it is the product of the late 1460s, and in particular to 1469, when John Schoppe and Richard Haddon were churchwardens. The contents include constitutions and ordinances, a list of parish benefactors, inventories of church goods, a list of churchwardens, and digests of churchwardens' accounts. By comparison with surviving copies of original accounts Dr Burgess has shown that these last were not simply intended to present fair copies, since they were neither entirely accurate nor comprehensive; instead, he suggests, they, together with much of the book as a whole, were designed to encourage present and future parishioners to greater efforts in support of their church, either in the capacity of churchwardens or as benefactors, or both. The list of benefactors and churchwardens informed the prayers that were requested of the parishioners at the General Mind, the inventories, benefactors' list and churchwardens' accounts commemorated the gifts and other forms of material support given to the church over the years. The book's purpose is exemplified in the following passage, an account of one of the All Saints' vicars, Maurice Hardwick:

> Item he laboured to compile and make this book for to be a memorial and remembrance for ever for the curates and the churchwardens that shall be for the time, that every man to put yearly his account for one evidence of the livelode of the church, and for to put in names of the good doers and the names of the wardens of the church and what good they did in their days that they must yearly be prayed for.

---

[182] *The Ordinances of Bristol, 1506-98*, ed. Maureen Stanford, BRS, 41 (1990), 5-7, 103.

[183] This comprises cartularies for St Augustine's Abbey and St Mark's Hospital, and estate accounts and compoti for St Augustine's: *The Cartulary of St Augustine's Abbey*, ed. Walker; *Two Compotus Rolls of St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol, for 1491-2 and 1511-12*, ed. G. Beachcroft and Arthur Sabine, BRS, 9 (1938); *Some Manorial Accounts of St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol*, ed. Arthur Sabine, BRS, 22 (1960); *The Cartulary of St Mark's Hospital, Bristol*, ed. Charles Ross, BRS, 21 (1959).

[184] *REED Bristol*, liii-lv; *The Church Book of St Ewen's, Bristol, 1454-1584*, ed. Betty R. Masters and Elizabeth Ralph, BGAS, 6 (1967), xv & n. 2.

[185] *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints', Bristol: Part I*, ed. Clive Burgess, BRS, 46 (1995). The following paragraph is based on the Introduction, xiv-xli.

The Church Book promised significant spiritual benefits to those memorialised in its pages, but it also carried the threat of oblivion. Apparently, Richard Haddon, one of the book's originators, fell foul of his church in the 1470s when he refused to honour his father's will to found a chantry there, and sold the property instead. The parish unsuccessfully sought to recover the endowment in the law courts, and, it seems, made every effort to expunge Haddon's name and memory from the Church Book. The church books of St Ewen's and St John's very probably had much of the same function. The financial rewards to be gleaned from civic or parish office were probably not great, and in themselves would not have justified the expenditure of money, time and effort that was entailed. Other incentives were necessary to encourage "good citizenship", first among these being the promise of acquiring a good reputation while alive, and a good memory afterwards. Before the Reformation, the belief in Purgatory added powerfully to these attractions.

Apart from their own administrative archives, religious houses also owned copies of chronicles and other works dealing with history within their libraries. Internal evidence suggests that the copy of the Flores historiarum used by Ricart was made in a Dominican scriptorium, and this may have belonged to the Friary in the Bristol suburb of Broadmead.[186] This can only be speculation, but William Worcestre is clear that other named chronicles and other historical works – broadly defined - were owned by Bristol religious houses and individual clerics.[187] Worcestre tells us that he made notes from a number of such works: a martyrology at the Dominican Friary; Josephus's De bello Judaico owned by a priest at the parish church of St Thomas; the Chronicle of Marianus Scotus at All Saints'; and a tablet in Temple Church recounting the history of the Knights of St John. In addition, he noted a work on the Six Ages of the World (based, ultimately, on Augustine's periodization) at the Hospital of St John in Redcliffe.[188] On the basis of this list it is difficult to discern any pattern in the historical interests of members of the Bristol clergy, and impossible to guess at how these works might have been used.

The motive behind the production of "Abbot Newland's Roll" is fairly clear. In one version this consists of an illustrated genealogy of the Berkeley family which descends alongside notes on successive abbots of St Augustine's, together with brief notes of their major achievements. John Newland was abbot from 1481 until 1515. In the preamble we are told that this roll was compiled and translated from Latin in the fifth year of Henry VII (1489/90).[189]A paper copy was made and continued after this date. The preamble begins with the words:

> Hereafter folowith the trewe and noble Petegre of William,Lord Marquyes Berkeley Earle of Notyngham and gret Marchall of England

A little later Abbot Newland declares that:

---

[186] Fleming, "Making History", 301.

[187] The following list is compiled from *William Worcestre: Itineraries*, ed. Harvey, 322/3, 316/7, 320/1, 304/5, 312/3; *Topography*, 114/5-116/7. Oddly perhaps, none of these works seems to have been used by Ricart.

[188] For which, see Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 114-5.

[189] Gloucestershire Archives, D471/Z5. The paper copy, continued to 1515, is among the Berkeley Castle muniments: Jeayes, "Abbot Newland's Roll", J. H. Jeayes, "Abbot Newland's Roll of the Abbots of St. Augustine's Abbey, Bristol", TBGAS, 14 (1889-90), 117-30. Such a format was fairly common: for other examples of genealogical chronicles of founders' families produced in English religious houses, see Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 81-5.

> Full moche convenient hit thinketh me that all Religious Men knowe bi name their fundatours and especial Benefactours for whom thei ought most devoutely pray…And for this cause movid y the foresaid John Newland Abbot for my more larger knowledge and information of My brethren Chanouns present And for evir after to be Come have taken upon me to put into writing the lineal And trew descent of [the Berkeleys]

However, the fact that this roll is written in English, and the emphasis on the Berkeley genealogy, suggests what its true purpose was. While this is a monastic chronicle, in the sense that it was produced in a monastery, its intended recipient was a layman, William, Marquess Berkeley. William, already in his sixties, was busy making plans for his death, ensuring that his body would be honourably interred and that his soul's passage through Purgatory would be eased with a plethora of prayers. His eyes were not entirely fixed on the after-life, however. He had fallen out with his younger brother and sole heir, Maurice, probably in the mid-1480s, and his other obsession involved disinheriting Maurice by granting away his lands to Henry VII and certain of his prominent ministers in return for ever more grandiose titles.[190] The Roll, addressing the twin themes of salvation and lineage, would have accorded well with William's two abiding concerns.

The Berkeley family history given in the Roll goes back to Harding in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and is fairly detailed. This is in stark contrast to the Bristol chronicles, in which the town's history before the 1240s is lost in myth and oblivion. Thus, one benefit of founding a religious house was that the founder's family and descendants would be remembered, long after the progeny of those without the resources for such an act of religious charity had vanished from memory. The point of such strategies of remembrance was that the souls of the founder and his lineage would continue to be prayed for, it was believed, until the end of time. Accordingly, next to the entry on the Roll relating to Robert fitz Harding and his wife Eve is a long list of "the Speciall thingis don for" Robert and Eve his wife, in the form of prayers and works of charity for their souls. One of the genealogical sources used by the compiler of the Roll is identified in relation to this description of the spiritual benefits accruing to Robert and Eve:

> so apperith bi his Obite in o[u]r martilloge, which is verily in o[u]r chapiter howse in this forme rehersid. This day decessid Robert fiz Herding Chanon and o[u]r fundator.

The Roll is fairly assiduous in giving the days and months in which the lords Berkeley and their wives died, including, occasionally, some information about the circumstances of their deaths: for example, Maurice, described as the son and heir of Maurice II (d. 1281), we are told, was killed in a joust at Killingworth on 14 February.[191] As in this instance the year of death is not given, and this is generally the case until the death of Thomas II in 1321. This is probably because the memory of each Berkeley lord and lady was kept alive through the "martilloge", the day of the death being remembered each year as part of the round of annual obits and other prayers and works of charity done on the appropriate day and month; this practice does not require that the year of death be

[190] *Berkeley Castle Muniments*, ed. Bridget Wells-Furby, BGAS, 17 (2004), vol. 1, xlvii-xlix; Peter Fleming and Michael Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle: Nibley Green, 1470* (Tempus, Stroud, 2003), 100-104.

[191] This is followed by Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys,* vol. 1, 147-8, but Wells-Furby believes him to have been the second son: *Berkeley Castle Muniments*, xxx.

remembered. In addition to this document, effectively a bede roll, charters were another important source of information for compiling the family history: the Roll states that Robert II, Lord Berkeley, was brought up at the court of Henry II, as he remembered in his charter recording a grant to the Abbey in return for prayers for the king's soul.

The Roll also records the text of a charter – like everything else given in an English translation or paraphrase - of Maurice, Robert's son and heir, in which he confirmed all of his father's gifts to the abbey. According to the Roll, Maurice's wife, Alice, daughter of Roger de Berkeley of Dursley, came of the line of Edward the Confessor (in this case, it seems, English descent was not a problem, provided it was royal); this Berkeley family had been staunch supporters of King Stephen and suffered the loss of their Berkeley caput, which was transferred to Robert fitz Harding. The Roll also claims that the marriage took place in Bristol in the presence of King Stephen and Henry, Duke of Normandy, from 1154 King Henry II of England: which is unlikely, for the marriage is known to have occurred at some point in the decade from 1153. The Roll is also careful to describe the exact location of the Berkeley tombs: this too would help to preserve the memory of their occupants.

Such functions were fairly standard across monastic genealogical chronicles. Abbot Newland's Roll had an additional point to make when it came to the fifteenth century. After the death of Thomas IV Lord Berkeley in 1417, leaving a daughter, Elizabeth, as his only surviving child, his descendants had been engaged in a sporadic but bitter feud between those who claimed the inheritance through the male line and those who claimed to be heirs general. The former had the clearer legal case, tracing their claim to an entail in tail male made by Thomas III Lord Berkeley (d. 1361), but the latter initially had the upper hand, since Elizabeth was the countess of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and one of the most powerful men in the land. The Marquess was the grandson of the original heir male, James, Elizabeth's uncle.[192] Naturally, the Roll's account of this troubled period is firmly on the side of the heirs male. Thomas III's entail is described in some detail. Of Richard Beauchamp, we are told that he "w[i]t[h] grete force laborid to haue had the Barony of Berkley and causid grete trowble there fore". William's father James (d. 1463), "succedid his vnkyll Thomas lord of Berkley by vertue of the intayle", conveniently ignoring the counter-claims, dispossessions and other convolutions that marked his troubled career. There is of course no question but that he was the rightful heir. William is of course given his full titles, "Marquyes Berkley and Graunte Erle Marshalle of Englande and also Erle of Notyngham".

There are two reasons why Abbot Newland would have wanted Berkeley patronage at this particularly point. The first is that the Abbey and the mayor and common council of Bristol were embroiled in a struggle over the jurisdiction of College Green, a struggle that in 1496 would result in a major outbreak of violence. [193] Abbot Newland may have hoped for support from the powerful Lord Berkeley. The second reason is that Abbot Newland was a great builder, and had undertaken to complete the rebuilding of his Norman church. As the description of his achievements in the later copy of the Roll says:

---

[192] *Berkeley Castle Muniments*, ed. Wells-Furby, vol. 1, xxxvii-xlvi; Fleming and Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle*, passim.

[193] Peter Fleming, "Conflict and Urban Government in Later Medieval England: St Augustine's Abbey and Bristol", *Urban History*, 27 (2000), 325-43.

> Also the said Reverend father In his tyme bildid the dortor and frayter, the Priores logginge, the yatehouse, the Amerywith the logginges next adioynant, the hey barne, the stabilles ioynyng to the malt howse, with the fundacioun of the body of the church to the soilis of the Wyndos of the north side And the westend with other Houses of office..

All this building cost money. Newland probably looked to Berkeley to help share the financial burden. Berkeley died in February 1492, so the amount of assistance he gave may have been very limited.

This chapter has shown that History was of clear practical value to fifteenth-century Bristolians, even if their grasp of the history of their own town was shaky in the extreme. Lacking constructions of the past based on archival research, they were dependent on the accumulation of reportage, and this soon faded into oblivion and myth. Nevertheless, the version of the their past that was available to them was taken very seriously, at least by the burgess class, who recognised its potential for defending privileges and liberties, and for influencing behaviour. Abbot Newland's Roll reminds us once again of the importance of memory to fifteenth-century chroniclers and bureaucrats. To a significant extent written accounts of the past were made to create or stimulate memory, as opposed to existing in their own right as records to be filed, catalogued and referred to when needed. Being remembered, for the right reasons, was an essential part of the economy of salvation. The threat of not being remembered, or of being remembered for the wrong reasons, could be a powerful means of encouraging compliance to authority. Part of the apparatus of control available to Bristol's elites was the ability to create and preserve a version of history that justified their dominance. They would not have demurred from the assertion that "He who controls the present, controls the past. He who controls the past, controls the future".[194]

[194] George Orwell, *1984* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949), Chap. 3.

Chapter Three: Memory

From the previous discussion the desire to preserve and prompt memory has emerged as an important motivation behind the production and preservation of historical writing in fifteenth-century Bristol. The need to preserve and stimulate memory – but also to shape and control it – can be detected in the Red Books and the Great White Book, but it is explicit in The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar and is at the heart of Abbot Newland's Roll. This was not unusual. While levels of literacy, book-ownership and the bureaucratic uses of writing in fifteenth-century England were probably higher than they had ever been, this was still a culture in which the written word was rarely the first and most obvious means of communicating and preserving information. Pre-modern England, before the widespread adoption of relatively cheap print and the emergence of mass education, had what was still, predominantly, a culture of memory. Written texts were often seen as adjuncts to memory.[195] The written word was often regarded, in educated circles, as not much more than a prompt for memory, while the products of scribes might even be regarded as less dependable than the recollection of a disciplined mind, trained in mnemonic techniques. In such a milieu, feats of memory that to us might seem prodigious were relatively commonplace.[196] Before the Reformation this was also a culture of remembrance, since later medieval Christianity, with the doctrine of Purgatory placed firmly in its midst, enjoined upon the living the obligation to remember the dead. Bristol was no exception to fifteenth-century culture, in which the need to remember, and to commemorate, was fundamental.[197]

William Worcestre and Memory

Bristol is unique among fifteenth-century English towns in having had both a local chronicle tradition, of which Ricart's Kalendar is the most substantial survival, and in having been the subject of a detailed series of notes compiled by an intelligent and curious observer, in the person of William Worcestre. A close equivalent is, perhaps inevitably, London, whose chronicle tradition almost certainly predated Bristol's, and was much richer, but London had to wait until John Stowe, in the later sixteenth century, for its learned observer.[198] This coincidence allows us to compare what Bristolians knew about their town's past as revealed by chronicles, with what was remembered. Admittedly, we can only work in detail with the memories of one man,

---

[195] For example, Southampton's equivalent of the Bristol "Red Books", compiled from 1440 onwards, had the words *Liber Remembr' Vill' Suthmpton*' inscribed on its cover as its fifteenth-century title: *The Book of Remembrance of Southampton, Volume I, 1440-1620*, ed. H. W. Gidden, Southampton Record Society (Southampton, 1927), vii.

[196] See Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (CUP, 1992), particularly 'Introduction' and Chapters 5-7.

[197] The classic work on the emergence of the doctrine is still Jacques le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (English trans. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1984).

[198] John Stow, *A Survey of London. Reprinted from the Text of 1603*, ed. Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908-27), also available at http://www.british-history.ac.uk/source.aspx?pubid=593&page=1&sort=1 (accessed 20/04/13). An important collection of essays on Stow's life and works is *John Stow (1525-1605) and the Making of the English Past: Studies in Early Modern Culture and the History of the Book,* ed. Ian Anders Gadd and Alexandra Gillespie (London: British Library, 2004). Other relevant recent studies include Edward T. Bonahue Jnr., "Stow's Survey of London", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 38:1 (1998), 61-85, and William Keith Hall, "A Topography of Time: Historical Narration in John Stow's *Survey of London*", *Studies in Philology*, 88 (1991), 1-15, which discusses the inter-play of temporal and spatial perspectives in the *Survey*.

and one who, while born and raised in the town, was on the occasions of his note-makings a mere visitor, but in addition to his own personal recollections Worcestre does mention at several points what he has learned from others, both named individuals and what we might call "collective memory".[199] As we have seen, civic Bristol's historical sense of itself appears to have been seriously truncated, and did not extend, in any coherent way, beyond an average life-span; by contrast, Abbot Newland's Roll demonstrates that the family history of a noble dynasty, by virtue of being instituted within the commemorative and archival culture of the monastic house it founded, could reach back much further. We cannot know with any certainty what "ordinary" Bristolians understood of their individual, family or corporate histories, but we can at least begin to fumble towards an answer to such questions with reference to Worcestre, and beyond him there are scraps of evidence for how, what and why fifteenth-century Bristolians remembered.

But first we have to consider at greater length just what were Worcestre's intentions in compiling his notes on Bristol. These are much more detailed than any surviving notes of his other journeys. His careful measurement of so much of the town might well strike us as obsessive. Why did he feel the need to do this? How did he expect to put these measurements, and his other detailed observations, to use? There is no evidence that he intended his notes to be for anything other than his own personal enjoyment, nor is there any indication that these are but the surviving fraction of a wider-ranging set of notes, which in toto would have provided - to our minds, at least – a more balanced picture.[200]

In his Oxford Dictionary of National Biography article on Worcestre, Professor Orme commented that his Bristol notes would make it virtually "possible to compose a map".[201] Quite possibly, this is precisely what Worcestre was aiming to do. He had been born and brought up in the town and at the time of the writing of most of these notes, in 1480, he was in his sixty-fifth year: he probably had no more than two years left to live and must have known that this was very likely to have been his final visit. He still had family connections with Bristol and a strong emotional attachment: in these circumstances it would be entirely natural for him to want to find some way in which to remember the place once he was back in Norfolk. He had to construct an aide mémoire. He used the word memorandum very frequently in his Bristol notes, and he probably meant it literally: these were things to be remembered.

To us, one of the most obvious ways in which a locale could be remembered and its topography grasped would be through the production of a map, in this instance defined as a cartographic image of a place as a scale drawing. To Worcestre and his contemporaries, however, the notion of a map in this sense of the word would certainly not have come naturally. In particular, the production of a scale drawing of a town to the

---

[199] Hawlbachs, *On Collective Memory*; Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 39-49.

[200] Worcestre did produce two antiquarian volumes, now largely lost, *Antiquitates Anglie* and *De agri Norfolcensis familiis antiquis*, so it is possible that he intended to write up his Bristol notes: K. B. McFarlane, "William Worcester: A Preliminary Survey", in *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J. Conway Davies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 196-221, rep. in K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays*, ed. G. L. Harriss (London: Hambledon, 1981), 199-224, at 219-20. Even if this were the case, it is hard to imagine that Worcestre intended to include so many detailed measurements in the planned volume. A full summary and discussion of Worcestre's notes on Bristol churches is provided by Frances Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol churches in 1480", in *Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol: Essays in Honour of Elizabeth Ralph, 1911-200,* ed. Joseph H. Bettey (Gloucester: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2001), 28-54.

[201] Orme, "Worcester, William (1415-1480x85)" (accessed 14/04/13).

same level of detail as Worcestre managed in words in his Topography of Bristol would not be achieved in England until the seventeenth century.[202] As far as we know Worcestre was neither an artist nor a surveyor: the literary text was his natural milieu. His topographical measurements would have allowed him to reconstruct, in the comfort of his Norfolk study, a mental "map" of his birthplace.[203] In this he was adopting a similar methodology to that used by generations of bureaucrats throughout Europe. For example, in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Marseille, the detailed written descriptions of individual building plots compiled by public notaries created, in effect, a textual "map" of the city, which in turn allowed them to navigate around the place, both in real space and in their own imaginations, with relative ease.[204] Accepting Worcestre's Topography as a map might also lead one to reflect on the remarkable coincidence that, between 1478 and 1480, Bristol should have produced, in the form of this work and of the view included in Ricart's Kalendar, not one but two "maps" of itself, when any map of an English town was a considerable rarity. This should not be an unqualified reflection, however, since as shall be argued later, while Worcestre did, effectively, produce a map, even though one created through the medium of the written word, the pictorial image in the Kalendar, while clearly intended to bring Bristol to mind, could not have been used to navigate around the town, nor to reconstruct it mentally with any degree of topographical detail.

Any assertion that his Topography demonstrates Worcestre's emotional attachment to Bristol needs to be defended: after all, at first glance this is an objective, rather dry series of measurements and disconnected observations, in which Worcestre the man seems oddly detached from his subject. In fact, there are numerous passages where Worcestre comments on his family history, and even instances where a particular detail seems to kindle a childhood memory. While not exactly Proustian, these instances do reveal something of the human being, and are sufficient to justify the assertion that Worcestre's exploration of Bristol was also, to some degree, an exercise in self-exploration.

In line with the general tenor of the work these episodes are often related to physical locations, and particularly to family properties. For example, Worcestre notes the house where he was born: "In the second year of the reign of King Henry IV, W. Worcestre my father first leased the tenement of John Sutton upon The Back in St James's parish, in which tenement W. Worcestre was born".[205] This is one of a number of his father's properties that Worcestre mentions. These were located in Broadmead, where William Worcestre the elder held property since at least 1374/5, Old Market, near Lawford's Gate, where he held four houses and some gardens, and Winch Street, near Newgate, where he held two houses. He carried out significant building works at some of these properties, erecting a stone vault at Broadmead in 1428 and rebuilding his two houses near Newgate.[206] At least some of these Broadmead properties seem to have passed into William Worcestre the younger's possession, since in Broadmead he

[202] Catherine Delano-Smith and Roger J. P. Kain, *English Maps: A History* (London: The British Library, 1999), Chap. 2 and 179-93.
[203] For another example of medieval "textual mappings", see Keith D. Lilley, "Urban Mappings: Visualising Late-Medieval Chester in Cartographic and Textual form", in *Mapping the Medieval City*, ed. Clarke, 19-41, at 33-8. Hall, "A Topography of Time", 4-5, asserts much the same motive behind Stow's *Survey*.
[204] Daniel Lord Smail, *Imaginary Cartographies: Possession and Identity in Late Medieval Marseille* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999).
[205] *Topography*, no. 439. In his will of 1415 John Sutton bequeathed the rent on a tenement in St James's Back paid by William Worcestre the younger: Wadley, *Wills*, p. 95.
[206] *Topography*, nos. 13, 60, 62, 184, 191, 196, 213, 290, 439, 300.

measured the road going per tenementa mea Willelmi Worcestre.[207] These may have been the same properties that Worcestre records as having been brothels. In three separate entries he describes their inhabitants as having been mulieres fatuate or mulieres meretrices, translated by Neale as "wanton women"; once he explicitly states that they had been his father's tenants: tenentes patris mei. Worcestre's acknowledgement that his father profited from prostitution betrays no hint of moral discomfort.[208]

The particular attention that Worcestre gave to his father's properties might need no further explanation than that he had a proprietorial claim on some of them, but his concern was also part of a wider interest in his family history. He particularly wanted to record his mother's line, the Botoners. Such was the importance of his father's marriage to Elizabeth Botoner that William senior even adopted her family name as an alias. Thus, in his note recording his father's building of the stone vault in Broadmead, Worcestre describes him as "William Botoner, called W. Worcestre".[209] In a Memorandum concerning the death of his maternal grandmother, Matilda Botoner, in 1402, he notes that "her executors were Thomas Botoner her son and William Worcestre her son-in-law; and she had issue the said William Botoner [sic, error for Thomas Botoner], Elizabeth married to William Worcestre, and Alice married to Thomas Benisham", while in the same entry he records his father's sale of a Broadmead tenement to "Thomas Botoner my grandfather and Thomas Botoner his eldest son...".[210] Elsewhere there is an extended recollection of the latter Thomas, Worcestre's uncle, who was a priest and a fellow of the Guild of Kalendars. This was prompted by a walk along the lane behind All Saints' church that still connects High Street and All Saints' Lane, in which he saw the outer wall of the south aisle of the church:

> ... next to which wall Sir Thomas Botoner, priest, may have been buried, on the east side of the south door; but I believe the bones of the said Sir Thomas were removed at the time of building the new aisle, and his tomb of freestone was likewise removed. ... [the lane extends to the house of the Kalends] where the said Sir Thomas Botoner was, as I have understood, a fellow. And he died in the house of the priory lodgings, to the certain knowledge of his sister Elizabeth, my mother [as] told to me about the fifth or sixth year of my childhood, as I suppose; because although I was present with him on the day of his death, with my mother, for leave-taking on the last day of his life, I did not have understanding [enough] to notice his appearance. And, as I believe, deeds and documents both of his inheritance in his house near the Guildhall in Broad Street, on the south side of the said Guildhall, and also of his inheritance from Thomas Botoner, father of him and of my mother, in the town of Buckingham, in West Street, situated and lying next to the river on the ... side, and in neighbouring villages, by reason ought to survive - sometime enquire of the Prior of the Kalends if there remain among their documents any documents of their fellow Sir Thomas Botoner.'[211]

---

[207] *Topography*, no. 196.

[208] *Topography*, nos 13, 196, 290. They lived by the Bars, and so just outside the town limits, where civic ordinances permitted prostitutes to reside. Neale translates these references as though Worcestre is referring to the prostitutes in the present tense, but his use of manebant, the imperfect form of the verb *maneo/manere* suggests otherwise.

[209] *Topography*, no. 62.

[210] The commission to prove the will of Matilda Botoner, widow, made in 1402, is TNA PROB 11/2A/43.

[211] *Topography*, nos 439, 33. Thomas Botoner, clerk of All Saints, died in 1419, when Worcestre was 4: TNA PROB 11/2B/317; in his will he wished to be buried in the churchyard of All Saints', but did not mention any family members. See also Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol churches in 1480", 32-3, 53.

Worcestre was too young to have remembered much about his uncle, and his knowledge of him seems largely derived from his mother, but the deathbed scene clearly made a lasting impression, even if at the time he did not understand what he was witnessing. Worcestre's comment on this, that non habui discrecionem ad noticiam persone sue, translated by Neale as having insufficient discretion to notice his appearance, would seem to mean that the young boy did not understand that the man at whose bedside he was standing was at the very end of his life. Perhaps characteristically, Worcestre's train of thought, having begun with buildings, ends with them as well, in the shape of his uncle's former properties in Bristol and Buckingham: it is unclear if Worcestre's interest in his uncle's deeds is that of a family historian or an acquisitive would-be heir.

As well as his mother, Worcestre's informants on his family history included his aunt, Agnes, daughter of Adam Botoner of Coventry, Thomas senior's brother, and wife of John Randolf. She told Worcestre that after Adam's death in the plague of 1386 she was sent, "to the care of Thomas Botoner ... to be looked after; and a certain John Randolf of Lawford's Gate, carrier, brought the said Agnes, then aged 4 years, from Coventry to Bristol"; evidently where either this John Randolf, or, more likely, his son, married her.[212] She also alerted Worcestre to the existence of another branch of the family: "Memorandum about [persons] named Titchmarsh, near the town of Worcester, or near the village of Eckington near Pershore: that they are kinsmen of William Botoner and Agnes Randolf, according to her account".[213]

Another informant was Elizabeth Nicholl, the daughter of Worcestre's godmother, Isabel or Elizabeth Nicholl, who died, according to her younger namesake, in January 1431, while,

> And in the same year, namely in the year of Christ 14[30[214]], to wit on All Souls Day, William Nicholl and - the husband of Elizabeth his wife, sailed out of the Kingroad in two ships, the one a fishing boat called the Cog Anne, and the other, to wit Elizabeth's husband, in the ship of Thomas Erle; and they both perished on St Katherine's Eve next following (work out the day of their death) to wit, the Cog Anne sunk, and the other ship captured by the Spaniards. Memorandum, that on Trinity Sunday next before the loss of the said ships, Elizabeth Nicholl daughter of Isabel Nicholl was married to a certain merchant.[215]

During his 1480 visit Worcestre probably stayed with his sister, the recently widowed Joan Jay, in her house on St Thomas's Street. She would doubtless have been another source of information, particularly with regard to the adventures of John Jay, probably the son of her brother-in-law, also called John, who set out to find the fabled island of

---

[212] *Topography*, no. 439. John Randolf, senior or junior, may have been identical with the witness to a demise of a watermill to John Hankechhurch from the prior of St James in 1396 (BRO P.St J/D/1/10), and to the Broadmead tenant of John Fluyt, of whose 1398 will Richard Worcestre, prior of St James, was overseer: Wadley, *Wills*, 62-3. Prior Richard Worcestre is mentioned in two other Bristol wills of the 1380s and 1390s (Wadley, *Wills*, 12, 39), and is also recorded in the 1390s in BRO P.AS/D/LM/A/11 and 5139/57.

[213] *Topography*, no. 439

[214] Worcestre dates this event with reference to the mayoralty of John Leycestre, mayor of Bristol from September 1430 to September 1431. All Souls in this mayoral year would therefore have fallen on 2 November 1430.

[215] *Topography*, no. 439.

Brasil in July of that year, only to be blown back to Ireland, where in September he was reported to be re-fitting his ship and re-organising his crew.[216]

Worcestre's interest in Robert Londe and John Leland, masters of the grammar school in Newgate, suggests that he was their pupil:

> At Newgate, where [was] formerly the grammar school of Master Robert Londe, head teacher with ... [John] Leland, master of grammatical studies in Oxford, saidto have been the flower of grammarians and poets in times long gone by. And he [Leland] died at the time that I first went to Oxford University to study, in Easter term in the year of Christ 1432, about the month of June, when a general eclipse occurred on St Botulph's Day
>
> MEMORANDUM 1469
> Master Robert Londe, grammar-master of the town of Bristol, died the 23rd February [1470 n.s.][217]

Despite the reputation of pre-modern school teachers as figures who inspired fear in their pupils, definitely never sparing the rod, these two seem to have left Worcestre with happy memories: the extant Latin-English exercise book, probably used in the Newgate school during Londe and Leland's tenure there, displays a relative humane approach to grammar teaching, and may indicate that their methods were rather "advanced" for their time.[218]

The use of external events, often aerial phenomena, to provide a system of temporal co-ordinates was very common in pre-modern chronicles and histories, although it was clearly not foolproof: Leland actually died in 1428, when Worcestre was only thirteen, while the eclipse was in 1433.[219] While Worcestre's notes reveal significant knowledge of his family history, the fact that he had to note this down at all, together with his reliance on close family members as informants, demonstrates that he had not always had this knowledge: rather, it was part of his project to educate himself about his Bristol roots.

While Worcestre's knowledge of his family history over the previous three generations may seem quite impressive to a modern reader coming from a culture supposedly characterised by weak family bonds, high geographical mobility and a tendency towards rootlessness, it was still not complete, at least to judge by his surviving notes. He made no mention of his Botoner great-grandparents, William and Alice of Coventry, their son John (d. 1391), nor their daughter Margaret, who married Simon Canynges (d. 1413), probable uncle of the great William Canynges who died in 1474, although he did know of another of William and Alice's sons, Adam (d. 1386); he appears to have been ignorant of his maternal grandparents, Thomas and Matilda.[220] He

---

[216] *Topography*, nos 294, 364, 394, 417 & n. 1, 418.

[217] *Topography*, nos 50, 237. For a biographyof John Leland/Leylond, see David Thomson, "Leylond, John (d. 1428)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16415 [accessed 10/09/12]), this does not mention this Bristol connection; for Robert Londe, see Nicholas Orme, *Education in the West of England, 1066-1548* (Exeter: Exeter UP, 1976), 38-40.

[218] Orme, *Education in the West of England*, 39-40.

[219] Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 22-33. Worcestre used the 1433 eclipse to date two more very different events. One was the killing of a monk by Hussite heretics (called by him "Lollards") near Gdansk, an episode he presumably read about in a chronicle; the other was the first mayoralty of John Sharpe: *Topography*, nos 119-20.

[220] Wadley, *Wills*, 90, note; TNA PROB 11/1/76, will of John Botoner of Coventry, 1391; Edith E. Williams, *The Chantries of William Canynges in St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol* (Bristol: William George's Sons, 1950), 49, 51, 85. Simon and Margaret Canynges were included among those whose good estate was to be prayed for as part of the foundation of the Barstaple chantry chapel at Holy Trinity Hospital by Lawford's Gate, along

does not mention his paternal grandfather, William Worcestre, who died in 1420, or grandmother, Joan, who outlived her husband by over thirty years.[221] Richard Worcestre, prior of St James in the 1380s and 1390s, and presumably a member of William's family, is not mentioned.[222] While there is the obvious danger of reading too much into these omissions, they do suggest how Worcestre's knowledge of his family might have begun to fade after his parents' generation.[223] Perhaps this was all but inevitable, given the low life expectancy of later medieval town-dwellers, but Worcestre's fascination with the past certainly embraced his own family history, and so one might expect his knowledge of this to have been much deeper than was usual among his peers. If urban families generally lasted no more than three generations, then it may be that their family memory was usually markedly shorter, unless supported by some form of institutionalised memory, such as a chantry foundation.[224] The Botoners' migration from Coventry may also have severed family history at this point, so that Worcestre could discover very little of the history of this line before the move.

A sense of the past becoming less well defined as it grew more distant might be apparent from Worcestre's use of language. The phrase used by Worcestre to place the schoolmaster John Leland's lifetime, which came to an end only a little over forty years earlier, was temporibus annis plurimis revolutis. He commented that a road in Broadmead had followed its path ab antiquis temporibus, and cooks and food-sellers had lived there "in the old days" (diebus antiquis); the chapel of St Mary had been founded "long ago" (ab antiquo); the church of St Giles "was long since (diu) united to the parish church of Lawrence or to the parish church of St Leonard, about the time of the reign of King Edward III"; while "a handsome chapel" had been founded "long ago" (ab antiquo).[225] When Worcestre wanted to refer to his own youth, when he had been a Bristol resident, he used quondam diebus meis, translated by Neale as "in my day".[226] These descriptions of past time seem fairly unspecific, whether referring to a period of a little over forty years, the reign of Edward III, or to an undefined "old days" or "long ago". This might be taken to suggest that the past became very hazy beyond living memory. Of course, without points of reference - mnemonic or organizing structures - this would be the case for everyone. As we have seen, such a structure could be provided by the genealogy of a magnate dynasty but, at least to judge from Ricart's Kalendar, the use of national or international events, even something as basic as the reigns of English kings, had severe limitations as an aid to ordering and remembering local events. Certainly, the widespread adoption of 1189 as the limit of legal memory, beyond which was "time immemorial", suggests that few thought it practical or reasonable to delve any further back in search of precedents.

When Worcestre wanted to find out about past events in Bristol beyond his own family history, he sometimes asked particular individuals, and named them in his notes. Thus, from John Norton, freemason, he learned that the spire of St Mary Redcliffe had been "thrown down by chance of a storm and lightning", but his informant was

---

with the souls of William Botoner and Alice his wife, presumably Margaret's parents, in 1412: TNA SC 8/96/4773 and W. Leighton, "Trinity Hospital, Bristol", *TBGAS,* 36 (1913), 251-87, at 256-7.

[221] William Worcestre's will, 1420: Wadley, *Wills*, 107-8. For Joan, see ibid, 127, and BRO 5163/161.

[222] William Page, *A History of the County of Gloucester*, vol. 2 (London: Victoria County History of England, 1907), 75 (http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=40272#n29 [accessed 20/04/13]).

[223] A John Worcestre, alive in 1485, may have been one of William Worcestre's sons: BRO 00859/7.

[224] It must be said that some urban chantry, and other obit, foundations did extend to grandparents.

[225] *Topography*, nos. 61, 166, 352, 383.

[226] *Topography,* no. 71.

evidently unable to provide him with a date: the storm occurred in 1445/6, thirty-five years earlier.[227] The next example concerns a rather extraordinary claim:

> Memorandum, that one Dynt, a pumpmaker by trade, of the town of Bristol, saidto several people that he had heard from elderly and aged people that told him they had seen a tree, called in English a hawthorn tree, growing on the spot [in] the High Street where the splendid Cross is sited.[228]

While the High Cross is traditionally supposed to have been erected to celebrate Bristol's 1373 charters, on stylistic grounds a date around 1400 looks more likely for its construction, but this still means that the hawthorne tree would have to have been remembered for over eighty years by the time that Worcestre spoke to Dynt: even so, this passage of time by no means invalidates the claim. Depending on the age of Dynt, and on how long ago he may have spoken to his aged informants, and how old they were, he could indeed have been passing on a genuine memory to Worcestre.[229] That there should have been a tree growing at the very centre of this large and busy town seems inherently unlikely, but it may have been that very peculiarity that made it memorable. In other instances, where his informants are not identified, Worcestre may have been gleaning information from the collective memory, of which his own recollections may have been a part. Such appears to have been the case with his striking observation regarding the boat and textiles found during excavations at Pylle End Street, his recording of the name Ghyston Cliff, "as it is called by the common people", and the presence of the Jewish Synagogue, "according to what many people have told me".[230]

The collective memory can strategically forget, as well as remember. This may have been the case with Bristol's great insurrection of 1312-16. The omission of this episode from town chronicles and annals was evidently reflected in the collective memory of ordinary Bristolians. Defense Street (Vicus defensorius) was probably named after the wall built by the townspeople during that conflict to provide a defence and fighting platform against the castle garrison, but Worcestre's notes on the street contain barely a hint of this likely derivation: "The defensive road (Via defensiua deffendstrete) … entering and defending the great wall between the Castle [and] the town of Bristol, which same wall clung closely (adherebat) to the defensive wall of the aforesaid town".[231] In other instances Worcestre might simply get things wrong. Ricart and other Bristol chroniclers knew that Bristol Bridge had been rebuilt under Henry III, but Worcestre maintained that it "was first founded by King John of England", in 1215, suggesting that he was confused over the date of the rebuilding, and furthermore assumed this to be the first building of an Avon bridge.[232]

---

[227] *Topography*, no. 337 7 n. 1; Michael Q. Smith, *St Mary Redcliffe: An Architectural History* (Bristol: Redcliffe, 1995), 71, 77; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol churches in 1480", 45-6.
[228] *Topography*, no. 419.
[229] M. J. H. Liversidge, *The Bristol High Cross* (BHA, 42, 1978).
[230] Appendix One,.
[231] *Topography*, no. 296; for the possible derivation of "Defense Street" see Coates and Scherr, "Some Local Place-Names in Medieval and Early-Modern Bristol', 167-8.
[232] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 472, and see Appendix One.

Memory and the Law

While writing and written records already underpinned the culture of fifteenth-century English public life, memory was still granted a credence in legal and quasi-legal proceedings that was greater than would normally be the case today. How this was manifested in Bristol can be illustrated by the following examples.

In 1482 Mayor John Forster, sitting in his court at the Counter, received a letter containing the testimony of 64 men made in response to the claim that William Byrde, a merchant of Bristol, was "a bounde man borne and of bounde lynage by all his aunceters of olde tyme past to the Lorde de la Ware by a manour that the same lorde hath in Gloucestre shire…".[233] The deponents had written to contradict this claim and to prove, by their testimonies, that neither Byrde nor his ancestors were of villein stock. Many came from Birmingham and Coventry, including several of William's kinsmen. The story they told was as follows:

> …one Phelepott Byrde grauntfader of the seide William Byrde was borne in the Town of Byrmyngeham aboveseid In the reigne of Kyng Edward the IIIde Andhad a free place in the same town of Byrmyngeham that Succedid to hym lyniallybe right Enherytaunce of his Auncetrees And for a certeyn offence that the same Phelipott in his youth dede in Byrmyngeham above reherced fledde oute of this Countrey and went to a place in Gloucestre shire called Birdleyp in Kynge Richard Dayes the IIde and there wedded a wyf by whome he had diverse children And ellysthe progenitours of the same Byrdes have continued and been here in Byrmyngehamand not in Gloucestre shire abovesaid tyme ouet of mynde as Freemen and of free Conditions borne…

Clearly, it was preferable that one's grandfather was a fugitive miscreant than a villein. This version of Byrde's ancestry was accepted. Whether or not we choose to believe the story, it was obviously intended to be credible, and so the preservation of this family tradition over a period of around a hundred years was not considered inherently improbable. If we are to believe that each of the deponents to this letter knew this story independently of each other (admittedly, a questionable assumption), then it follows that the notoriety of Phelepott Byrde was widespread across the West Midlands!

As part of the enquiries into the affray in 1496 between the parties of the mayor and the abbot of St Augustine's, a number of testimonies were taken from deponents for either side. Among those testifying on behalf of the mayor was John Tyler, a weaver of Temple Street, aged sixty.[234] In answer to a question about the town's exercise of jurisdiction on the Abbey Green, he cited a number of cases where felons had been taken out of the sanctuary of St Augustine's by the mayor's officers and executed. He referred to a case dating back to "xxij yeris goon, oon John Cogan then Maire of Bristowe, John Jay then being Shirief…", and he recalled the name of one of the felons, John Broun; Cogan and Jay were in office together, albeit in 1472-3, one year earlier than he remembered.[235] That Tyler should have remembered this incident over the space of twenty-three years seems reasonably credible, and, although we cannot dismiss the possibility that he was coached by one of the Mayor's party before giving this testimony, assuming that this is genuine, then his ability to pin-point this event to within a year of its occurrence with reference to the mayoralty and shrievalty is

[233] This paragraph is based on *GRBB, Text, Part IV*, 93-6, and see above, 00-00.
[234] *GWBB*, 54-5. For the 1496 affray, see Fleming, "Conflict and Urban Government", passim.
[235] John Latimer, "The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, its List of Civic Officials Collated with Contemporary Legal MSS", *TBGAS*, 26 (1903), 108-37, at 133.

impressive. Tyler also asserted that a convicted murderer had been taken from sanctuary and hanged fifty years previously, when he would have been ten, and this is obviously harder to accept as a genuine memory. He offered no further details regarding this alleged occurrence. By contrast, an episode he said took place 40 years earlier is supported by details that, if not offered as genuine memories, however garbled, suggest that Tyler had a richly creative mind. He alleged that:

> …a patrone of a Caryk that cam then to Newport in Wales dyd there and offens, devouryng as it was said a yong gentliwoman, and he was feyn for his saufgard to com to Bristowe where he was in the Freris Augustyns, and after sleyn with walsh men by thassent of his own seruaunt, and that seruaunt and oon of the murderers went to seynt Austens. After that they were taken oute of it and Jugid to dye, the walsh man was put to execucion the same day, that other that was seruaunt to the patrone so murdred, he was respyted for that he confessid to bechristen man. After this Jugement was cristenyd in Bristowe and after hangyd.All which thynges this deponent herd and sawe as he saith.

While it is quite possible to believe that the memory of such a sensational case should have made a permanent lodging in the mind of the twenty-year old Tyler, the detail about the murdered rapist's servant declaring himself not to be a Christian, presumably in an attempt to avoid or at least delay execution, only to be baptized and then hanged, is striking. Tyler is unlikely to be consciously lying, since this is not the sort of statement made by a liar hoping to be believed, and there are possible candidates for his non-Christian servant. He could have been an Iberian Jew or Muslim, the African slave of a Spanish or Portuguese master, or an African seaman. Bristol voyages to North Africa were rare, but not unknown: in 1480/1 the Trinity passed through the Straits of Gibraltar to visit Oran, in modern-day Algeria.[236] Tyler's testimony provides an unusual example of the memories of a lower-rank individual. None of the other deponents whose testimony is recorded for this case provided comparable memories, and such extant depositions are rare before the sixteenth century.

Another instance of how systems of law and administration could make use of the memories of witnesses from the lower ranks is provided by testimonies relating to proof of age (probatio aetatis) cases, where the age of an heir to an estate who was claiming to have reached legal maturity was tested by a jury of twelve men. In 1418 John, the son of William Solers, sought to prove that he was now twenty-one through the testimonies of jurors who claimed to remember his baptism in the church of St John the Baptist, Bristol, on 16 December 1393. One group of five men, aged between 49 and 55, claimed to have been drinking in a house just outside St John's Gate when they were summoned by William Solers' apprentice, John Norton, to witness the baptism; two others, aged 42 and 48, said that they had carried a ewer, basin and candle from the Solers house to the church for the baptism, while five more, aged between 44 and 58, testified that during the baptism they were underneath the nave of the church, in the crypt, witnessing an arbitrated agreement being made between a bowyer and a goldsmith, and that after the agreement was reached they went into the church to have it enrolled before the mayor. All three groups identified the year with reference to the mayoralty of John Somerwell, which lasted from 1393 to 1394 (in which year William

[236] "The Accounts of John Balsall, Purser of the Trinity of Bristol 1480-1", ed. Thomas F. Reddaway & Alwyn A. Ruddock, *Camden Miscellany*, 23 (Camden Soc., 4th ser., 7, London, 1969), 1-28.

Solers was a bailiff).[237] The details of these testimonies can be matched by numerous other proof of age enquiries and, indeed, such testimonies were often fictitious, concocted of conventional motifs that no-one expected to be carefully scrutinized. Certainly, the repeated common reference point of Somerwell's mayoralty looks suspicious, but even if these testimonies had been entirely fictional, they would still have to have been credible; in other words, it could not have been beyond the bounds of possibility that these twelve men had such detailed recollections of such events that occurred twenty-one years earlier.[238]

The above cases suggest that testimony based on personal or collective memories of relatively distant events was taken seriously in legal or quasi-legal proceedings. Reliance on memory, rather than documentary evidence, was a common element in the commercial life of later medieval Bristol. A common practice was for two parties to agree to be bound by the terms of a written bond, but to leave the exact terms of that bond as a verbal agreement: one man might agree to pay another a certain sum of money on a given date, and this would be duly recorded as a written bond, but the condition, that this sum need be paid only if certain goods were not delivered by that date, would not be recorded, both men understanding the bond to be, in reality, a 'penalty clause' only to be enforced should the verbal contract not be honoured. This practice seems to have worked tolerably well, and its success depended on two things: firstly, that the parties' fear of the consequences of acquiring the reputation of being untrustworthy dissuaded them from denying the terms of the verbal contract; and secondly, that the terms of that contract would be precisely and accurately remembered. However, there was often a problem when one of the parties to such a contract died within the period specified within the document. His executor, usually his widow, on finding the record of the bond among his papers, and ignorant of the verbal condition, might then seek to enforce what looked like a straightforward promise to pay, even though the goods or services had been delivered, or were no longer expected to be delivered because of her husband's death.

This may have been what lay behind a case brought before Bristol's Tolzey Court by John Drowar in the 1460s: Drowar claimed that William Lose had promised to pay him £20 by a verbal contract, but that his widow and executor, Maud, was unlawfully withholding the sum. Maud and her second husband, John Rogers, a Bristol mercer, counter sued in Chancery, alleging that Drowar was using a false claim to confound their attempt to extract a £40 debt that he had owed to Lose, and that they could not get a fair hearing before the Tolsey because Lose had bribed the bailiff to assemble a sympathetic jury. Maud and John Rogers stated in their suit that while a verbal bond was not recognized in Common Law, it was recognised in Bristol's customary law.[239]

Margery, widow and executor of John Stacy, a Bristol merchant in the mid fifteenth century, also had problems with her husband's verbal agreement. Stacy had delivered some merchandise to another Bristol merchant, William Gryffyth, and in

---

[237] *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and Other Analogous Documents Preserved in the Public Records Office XXI: 6-10 Henry V (1418-1422)* ed. J. L. Kirby and Janet Stevenson (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2002), no. 371; for Solers as bailiff, see Latimer, "Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar", 129.

[238] For comparable accounts of baptisms, see William S. Deller, "The First Rite of Passage: Baptism in Medieval Memory", *Journal of Family History*, 36:3 (2011), 3-14. John Bedell, "Memory and Proof of Age in England, 1272-13", *Past and Present*, 162 (1999), 3-27 discusses the procedures and testimonies of proof of age juries, but a rigorously sceptical approach is taken by Matthew Holford, "'Testimony (to Some Extent Fictitious)': Proofs of Age in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century", *Historical Research*, 82 (2009), 635-54.

[239] TNA C1/30/39.

return Gryffyth had bound himself to Stacy in two obligations of £25 each, effectively promising to pay £50 for the items. All but £2 10s. of this debt had been paid by the time of Stacy's death, but the two men had not drawn up a written acquittance, and so Margery, allegedly ignorant of these circumstances but finding the written obligation among her husband's papers, sued Gryffyth before the Tolzey for the full £50.[240] The existence of a verbal acquittance was also the defence of the Bristol merchant Thomas Candell in a 1438 Chancery case. In this he alleged that Edith, the widow of another Bristol merchant, William Milton, was unjustly suing him for a debt of £2 6s 8d: while a written record of the debt's creation was made, its satisfaction had not been so recorded.[241]

We do not have to decide the truth or otherwise of any of these claims, merely accept that the fact of their being made demonstrates that the business practices to which they refer were credible and probably widely used. While Bristol's commercial life is likely to have been as firmly underpinned by written records as almost any other sphere of activity in fifteenth-century England, its merchants were clearly expected to carry around a good deal of information in their heads, and some of this could involve large sums of money. A good memory, therefore, was a very necessary attribute for a successful merchant.

Commemoration

Essentially, later medieval western, or Catholic, Christianity was experienced as a religion of memory and commemoration.[242] In common with all belief systems, medieval Christianity had a core stock of stories which its devotees were expected to know, along with their associated images and motifs, and to be able to call these to mind when prompted. Hence, the images of Christ, and the saints, with their attributes, were reproduced repeatedly, in various media.[243] More particularly to medieval western Christianity was the belief in purgatory, which by the fifteenth century was a well-established, and widely accepted, doctrine. By modern western standards life in later medieval England was terribly uncertain, but with very few exceptions everyone believed they knew what their own future held, at least in terms of what really mattered, which was their immortal soul's eventual fate. All but a few heretics hoped and expected that after their deaths their souls would be purified, before they could be admitted to Heaven's eternal bliss: the location for this process was Purgatory; the means were commonly envisaged as involving extremes of heat and cold, and it was believed that souls' long and tortured passage could be eased by acts done on Earth, either by the individuals concerned during their lifetimes, or by others on their behalf after death. The poor, it was deemed, were already suffering part of their purgatory here on Earth, and so they were not expected to undertake measures that were in any case beyond their means; they, indeed, as recipients of charity, were part of the means

[240] TNA C1/32/428.
[241] TNA C1/9/83.
[242] For later medieval English religion, the best overall survey and discussion is probably Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven & London: Yale UP, 1992), 9-376.
[243] Clive Burgess, "'Longing to be Prayed for': Death and Commemoration in an English Parish in the Later Middle Ages", in *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (CUP, 2000), 44-65, at 44-8.

by which those with some disposable income were expected to work towards their own salvation. In order to ease the soul's passage through Purgatory, resources were spent on good works. These good works took two forms: acts of charity and prayers of intercession, the latter said in the hope and expectation that these appeals to the Virgin Mary and the saints to intercede with God on behalf of a particular soul in Purgatory would be effective, and lessen their sufferings.

The efficacy of intercessory prayers depended on memory and commemoration. In the first instance, it was hoped that the memory of the deceased would be kept alive to those who would therefore be prompted to pray for them. Memories fade, however, and so commemoration, supported by obligation, was essential if prayers were to continue into the future. Beyond the immediate aftermath of a death, when it might be expected, or at least hoped, that the deceased's loved ones would naturally remember him or her in their prayers, and beyond this immediate knot of family and friends, prayers had to be prompted both by recurrent reminders of the deceased's good works, and by contractual requirements binding those who might never have known the person whose soul they were assisting. These requirements effected a major redistribution of resources from the relatively wealthy to the poor and to ecclesiastical institutions.[244]

This was as apparent in Bristol as anywhere else.[245] Indeed, as one of England's largest towns, Bristol exhibited certain characteristics that would have given its religious life particular richness and intensity. Firstly, its relative wealth meant that large numbers of clergy and ecclesiastic institutions could be supported: thus, fifteenth-century Bristol, with a population of around 10,000, had seventeen parishes and parish churches, an abbey, priory, nunnery, houses for all four orders of friars, and numerous

[244] In the case of William Canynges his generosity – or extravagance – towards religious and charitable causes during his lifetime alarmed Thomas Middleton, the father-in-law of his son and heir John, who feared that his daughter's husband would be effectively disinherited: TNA C1/44/163; transcribed in *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson , 140-3, and discussed in James Sherborne, *William Canynges*, BHA, 59 (1985), 25-6.

[245] The religious practices and beliefs found in later medieval Bristol's parishes have been thoroughly studied by Dr Clive Burgess, and little can be added to his work here. Consequently, the following section draws heavily on his work: "'For the Increase of Divine Service': Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36:1 (1985), 46-65; "A Service for the Dead: The Form and Function of the Anniversary in Late Medieval Bristol", TBGAS, 105 (1987), 183-211; "'By Quick and by Dead': Wills and Pious Provision in Late Medieval Bristol", *EHR*, 305 (1987), 837-58; "Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered", in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. Michael A. Hicks (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1990), 14-33; "Strategies for Eternity: Perpetual Chantry Foundations in Late Medieval Bristol", in *Religious Belief and Ecclesiastical Careers in Late Medieval England*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), 1-32; *The Parish Church and the Laity in Late Medieval Bristol*, BHA, 80 (1992); "'Longing to be Prayed for'"; "A Repertory for Reinforcement: Configuring Civic Catholicism in Fifteenth-Century Bristol", in , 85-108 "'An Afterlife in Memory': Commemoration and its Effects in a Late Medieval Parish", *Studies in Church History*, 45 (2009), 196-217; "Chantries in the Parish, or 'Through the Looking-Glass'", *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 164 (2011), 100-29; and the introductions to his editions of *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints', Bristol: Part 1*, BRS, 46 (1995); *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol [Part 2]: The Churchwardens' Accounts*, BRS, 53 (2000); *The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol [Part 3*]: *Wills, the Halleway Chantry Records and Deeds*, BRS, 56 (2004) . Any attempt to discuss every aspect of Bristol's religious life would be far beyond the scope of the present work, and so what follows is limited to a narrow focus on those aspects relating to memory and commemoration. For discussion of the piety of other urban elites, see Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 186-91.

hospitals, alms houses and chapels.[246] The concentration of all of these within a small space would have made their presence all the more imposing. The concentration of population brought levels of disease, and hence mortality, even higher than those experienced in the countryside, and so individuals could not rely on their descendants surviving over several generations, in the same place, in order to provide prayers for their soul. Other steps were necessary. The provision of such means, the purchasing of prayers and other acts beneficial to the soul, was made easier by Bristol's customary law of burgage tenure, by which real property could be freely devised by will, although this was not completely free of statutory restriction when it came to the transfer of property to the church as an institution. In much of England, elaborate legal expedients were necessary to allow property-holders the freedom to devise their property after death. Parishioners were expected to maintain their church's nave, and to play a central role in the management of the parish, not least through the two annually-appointed churchwardens, working under the direction of the "masters of the parish": as a community dominated by merchants and craftsmen, businessmen who can be expected to have had a good understanding of financial matters, it comes as no surprise that Bristol's parishes seem to have been generally well-administered.[247]

Typically, those with disposable property provided for a range of activities that would benefit their soul after death. Many established patterns of charitable and spiritual practice during their lifetimes, giving considerable proportions of their wealth to the work of their parish or to the poor and other charitable causes. Universal among the propertied classes was the provision for a funeral of varying degrees of elaboration, usually supplemented by masses and other religious services offered in the months and years that followed. These could take various forms, such as the month mind, held a month after the funeral, the anniversary, held a year afterwards, and the chantry, an arrangement whereby resources were made available to support regular, usually daily, masses for a long period of time, sometimes in perpetuity. Burgess has demonstrate that these provisions should not be regarded as simply intended to procure as many masses as possible for the deceased's soul; rather, they were usually thoughtfully planned to achieve a balance between personal commemoration, the commemoration of family and friends, often included among the intended recipients of prayers, and the provision of useful services to the parish. This last could take the form of additional equipment or furnishings provided for the church, or of additional personnel, for example, a priest employed to offer masses in a chantry could also be a valuable supplement to the liturgical life of the parish. Money, goods and real property donated to the church might also benefit the parish as a whole.[248] Of course, all of these provisions assisted the deceased's soul, as likely to elicit prayers from benefactors or as good works pure and simple, and so cannot be regarded as wholly altruistic or disinterested, but nonetheless, they do often demonstrate genuine affection and loyalty towards the parish and its church.

---

[246] Joseph H. Bettey, *The Medieval Friaries, Hospitals and Chapelries of Bristol, Avon Local History and Archaeology Books, 1* (2009); St Giles has not been counted among Bristol's parish churches, since by the 15th century it had been merged with the neighbouring parishes: Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 36.

[247] Burgess, *Parish Church and Laity in Late Medieval Bristol*, 7-9; *Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol [Part 2]*, ed. Burgess, 20-4; Burgess, "Strategies for Eternity", 9-15, 17-22, 32; GRBB, Introduction, 41-73. For an indication of the richness of Bristol's religious life that was lost with the Reformation, see Martha Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation, c. 1530-1570* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), passim.

[248] Burgess, "Chantries in the Parish", 104-5, 110-11, 124-5.

A common thread running through most, if not all, of these activities was the desire to be remembered. Funerals could be impressive affairs, with services held on the vigil, as well as on the day of the funeral itself; this might be attended by large numbers of family, friends, priests and other religious, and poor. Family and friends apart, large attendances were secured by payment, or by the provision of food and clothing for paupers, whose prayers were thought to be particularly efficacious. For example, in her will of 1408 the widow Katherine Calfe provided that on the day of her funeral thirteen poor women would sit at table in her house, to be provided with sufficient food and drink and a penny a piece for their prayers.[249] During the funeral the deceased lay under the parish hearse cloth which was supported above the body on a semi-circular framework, while a quantity of candles burned round about. At the anniversary the whole ceremony was repeated, without, naturally, the body being present.[250] The need to arrange anniversaries and other forms of regular commemoration would have meant that the executors, church-wardens, priests and others responsible for these ceremonies were obliged to keep careful note of the deceased's commemorative day.[251] Such events would have been very memorable, creating a vivid impression compounded of visual spectacle, the sound of prayers and liturgical music, and the scent of incense and candles. In the case of the very wealthy, the drama might be heightened still further by additional elements. For example, by his will of 1474 William Canynges, who died as Dean of the College of Westbury-on-Trym, requested that obsequies and mass be held over his body at Westbury before its carriage in procession to its burial service at St Mary Redcliffe, all the way being accompanied by all the fellows, chaplains, deacons and choristors of the college, among others.[252]

Even without such extravagant public displays, efforts were made to publicise funerals and anniversaries. Testators often requested peals of bells from the parish clerk. For example, Thomas and Joan Halleway's anniversary ceremony was to be preceded by four peals, three at the dirige on the vigil from one to seven p.m., and one on the day, rung from nine to eleven a.m., with the option of another two-hour peal after Mass. In addition, many also requested the services of the town beadle, also known as the "bellman" or "bedesman", who was to process around the town, according to the customary route, ringing a hand-bell and proclaiming that a service was to be held for the deceased; he may even have intoned prayers for the deceased himself as he walked around.[253] One imagines that large numbers of poor would have been drawn to the sound of bells by the prospect of sustenance, while others, former friends and well-wishers, would at the very least be prompted to say a prayer for the departed. Burgess has estimated, on the basis of known anniversary foundations, that by 1500 an anniversary was celebrated at least once every fortnight somewhere in Bristol.[254] In addition, the names of those to be prayed for could be entered on the parish bede-roll, for a small price, to join the roll-call of "good-doers" to the church and parish, read out every Sunday and at the parish's annual "General Mind", a major social event held as a sort of adjunct to the remembering of all the faithful deceased at All Souls' Day. For

[249] Wadley, *Wills*, 83.
[250] Thomas Jonys, "cofferer", who made his will in 1464, was among many testators to give elaborate instructions for their anniversaries: Wadley, *Wills*, 137.
[251] Burgess, "Service for the Dead", 197.
[252] Wadley, *Wills*, 151-3; *Chantries of William Canynges*, ed. Williams, 75, 77-8.
[253] Burgess, "Service for the Dead", 188-9.
[254] Burgess, "Service for the Dead", 194.

example, in 1405 Robert Crosman left 3s. 4d. so that the names of himself and his wife, and their respective parents, could be added to the All Saints' tabula memoria, to be repeated every Sunday, while in 1492 the vicar of the same parish, Thomas Baker, left 20s. to exhort the parishioners to pray for his soul every Sunday. As Crosman's case demonstrates, wider family could be included among those for whom prayers were requested, thereby maintaining the memory of the extended family group among succeeding generations of parishioners and, plausibly, deepening the parish community's sense of itself as a kind of spiritual family. In turn, the repeated rehearsal of the names of "good-doers", demonstrating through this means the spiritual benefit accruing to them, would have encouraged living parishioners to emulate their good deeds.[255] The provision of additional liturgical equipment, vestments or church furniture and fittings was a good work in itself, but such a donation's efficacy in preserving the memory of its donor could be considerably enhanced by the simple expedient of attaching their name to the item. Hence, Alice, widow of Henry Chestre, left a new hearse cloth for All Saints' parish, and left us in no doubt of at least part of her motive for so doing, requiring that the exhortation orate pro animabus Henricus Chestre et Alicie uxoris eius be appended to it, while the vicar, Maurice Hardwick, bequeathed a rich cloth to be displayed on every principle feast-day, on which were to be embroidered his initials.[256]

In addition to their fellow parishioners and parish church, many Bristol testators looked to other local religious institutions for spiritual services. The four friaries were often called upon in this capacity, as were the poor and sick in hospitals and almshouses, and, less often, the brothers and sisters of the regular institutions.[257] Prayers were also requested from fellow fraternity members.[258] The level of membership of religious fraternities is impossible to judge, but there were several of these, and they were undoubtedly popular. The best-known, and best-documented, is that of the Guild of Kalendars, located at All Saints. In common with all such fraternities, this provided funeral and commemorative services, including chantries, for its deceased members, whose memories would thus be kept alive down generations of fraternity members.[259] Membership of such fraternities, or religious guilds, could also bring a certain social cachet alongside the more obvious spiritual benefits. Such, at least, was certainly the case with the Palmers Guild at Ludlow. In the second half of the century this became so fashionable that members of the Yorkist and early Tudor royal households joined, and such celebrity membership attracted lesser lights from further afield; however, the guild had been attracting Bristol members since at least the 1370s. They are unlikely to have joined in the hope that this would allow them to rub shoulders with the great, since members from outside the Ludlow area took little part in the social activities associated with the Guild, and a number enrolled deceased kin alongside their

[255] Burgess, "'Longing to be Prayed for'", 53-6.
[256] Burgess, "'Longing to be Prayed for'", 56-7, 61.
[257] For example, in 1423 James Cokkes required all four orders of friars to attend his funeral service, and each were to find a chaplain to say 1000 masses for his soul in the month following: Wadley, *Wills*, 112-4.
[258] For example, in 1406 Richard Panys left a tenement on the Key to the Fraternity of St John the Baptist in return for prayers for himself and his kin (Wadley, *Wills*, 80), while in 1419 Simon Oliver left legacies to three fraternities: Wadley, *Wills*,104.
[259] Nicholas Orme, "The Guild of Kalendars, Bristol", TBGAS, 96 (1978), 32-52, at 35-7. The ordinances of the Fraternity of St John the Baptist, associated with the Tailors' Guild, are in *GRBB, Text, Part III*, 66-7.

own membership, clearly demonstrating that it was the Guild's highly regarded spiritual benefits they sought.[260]

Remembering benefactors, so that prayers could be said and acts of charity done for their souls in purgatory, as well, occasionally, as remembering or deliberately forgetting malefactors, was also a function of a category of records with which fifteenth-century Bristol is unusually rich. These are Church Books, and Bristol has three extant examples of them from this period, for the parishes of All Saints, St Ewen, and St John the Baptist. Typically, these contain inventories of church goods, ordinances, lists of benefactors, churchwardens' accounts, and memoranda concerning chantries and church property.[261] Burgess's work on the All Saints book has revealed that much of the basic motivation behind its compilation was commemorative.[262] The All Saints' Church Book reached essentially its present state in the 1480s, but most of it is the product of the late 1460s, and in particular of the year 1469, when John Schoppe and Richard Haddon were churchwardens, and as such played a major part in its composition, under the direction of the vicar, Maurice Hardwick. The contents include constitutions and ordinances, a list of parish benefactors, inventories of church goods, a list of churchwardens, and digests of churchwardens' accounts. By comparison with surviving copies of original accounts Burgess has shown that these last were not simply intended to present fair copies, since they were neither entirely accurate nor comprehensive; instead, he suggests, they, together with much of the book as a whole, were designed to encourage present and future parishioners to greater efforts in support of their church, in the capacity of churchwardens or as benefactors, or both. The list of benefactors and churchwardens informed the prayers that were requested of the parishioners at the General Mind (the annual commemoration for all church benefactors), or at weekly commemorations at High Mass, while the inventories, benefactors' list and churchwardens' accounts commemorated the gifts and other forms of material support given to the church over the years. The book's purpose is exemplified in the following passage, an account of Maurice Hardwick's vicariate:

> Item he laboured to compile and make this book for to be a memorial andremembrance for ever for the curates and the churchwardens that shall befor the time, that every man to put yearly his account for one evidence of the livelode of the church, and for to put in names of the good doers andthe names of the wardens of the church and what good they did in theirdays that they must yearly be prayed for.

The Church Book promised significant spiritual benefits to those memorialised in its pages, but it also carried the threat of oblivion. Apparently, Richard Haddon, one of the book's originators, fell foul of his church in the 1470s when he refused to honour his father's will to found a chantry there, and sold the property instead. The parish unsuccessfully sought to recover the endowment in the law courts, and, it seems, made every effort to expunge Haddon's name and memory from the Church Book. The church books of St Ewen's and St John's very probably had much of the same function. The financial rewards to be gleaned from civic or parish office were probably not great, and

---

[260] Michael Farady, *Ludlow, 1086-1660: A Social, Economic and Political History* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1991), 86-8. In 1457 Thomas Aisshe left a bequest to the guild: TNA PROB 11/4/172. See also Coventry's Holy Trinity Guild.

[261] *REED Bristol*, liii-lv; *The Church Book of St Ewen's, Bristol, 1454-1584*, ed. Betty R. Masters and Elizabeth Ralph, BGAS, 6 (1967), xv & n. 2.

[262] The following paragraph is based on Burgess, "Introduction", Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints', *Bristol: Part I*, xiv-xli.

in themselves would not have justified the expenditure of money, time and effort that was required. Other incentives were necessary to encourage 'good citizenship', first among these being the promise of acquiring a good reputation while alive, and a good memory afterwards.

A good and lasting memory could also be achieved through the production of artefacts more substantial than vestments and liturgical furnishings. For some, the establishment of a hospital or an alms house, either during their own lifetimes or after death, was an attractive option, since it ensured a constant supply of prayers from its inmates and demonstrated that the founder had stewarded his or her wealth to good purpose.[263] We know of seven institutions called 'hospitals' in medieval Bristol, of which only one, Holy Trinity, was founded after the thirteenth century. This was the work of John Barstaple (d. 1411), mayor in 1395, 1401 and 1405, who had founded the Hospital in 1395. However, at least eight almshouses were founded in the long fifteenth century. The difference between these and Holy Trinity is largely semantic, since all were established to care for the poor, sick and old in return for prayers, although the older, twelfth and thirteenth-century hospitals, were established by aristocratic or royal patrons, while Holy Trinity and the almshouses were founded by Bristol merchants, and tended to be smaller and less well-endowed. William Canynges founded two almshouses, one during his lifetime and one by the terms of his will. John Foster had already established his almshouse and chapel by his death in 1492: the chapel was built "in honour of God and the three Kings of Cologne", a very unusual dedication, and the almshouse was to house eight poor men and five poor women, with a priest, paid to celebrate a daily mass, and all were expected to pray for the souls of the founder and his wives and parents; other services for their souls were also provided for.[264] A variation on this kind of philanthropy was displayed by Thomas Knappe, mayor in 1403: he founded the Chapel of St John the Evangelist on the Back, whose two chaplains were to celebrate mass every morning at 5.00 for "the merchants, seamen, craftsmen and servants able to go and hear mass in the early morning", while also, it was doubtless expected, saying a prayer for the founder.[265]

More personal, and less apparently altruistic, was the provision of a tomb. Many testators took great care to specify where and how they were to be buried, and the prudent would have made these arrangements with their local church in good time before their deaths. Sometimes this would be prompted by the death of a spouse: William Canynges paid 6s. 8d. to the church wardens of St Mary Redcliffe for the site of his wife's grave in October 1467, less than a month after her death, and he would join her there seven years later.[266] Similarly, Simon Oliver requested burial next to his wife, under the stone he had prepared as their monument, while in 1430 John Cokkyng specified that he was to be buried next to his previous wife under a stone on which both of their names had been inscribed, and in 1473 William Coder desired burial under the

[263] For medieval hospitals, see Nicholas Orme and M. Webster, *The English Hospital, 1070-1570* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1995), and Sheila Sweetinburgh, *The Role of the Hospital in Medieval England: Gift-Giving and the Spiritual Economy* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004).

[264] Leighton, "Trinity Hospital", 251-87; Roger Price & Michael Ponsford, *St Bartholomew's Hospital, Bristol, The Excavation of a Medieval Hospital: 1976-8*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report, 110 (York, 1998), 19, 200-2; Bettey, *Medieval Friaries*, 29-29-33; Burgess, "'By Quick and by Dead'", 845-7.

[265] Bettey, *Medieval Friaries*, 35.

[266] Clive Burgess, "Canynges, William (1402–1474)", *ODNB* [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4581, accessed 24/10/12]; Williams, *Chantries of William Canynges*, 78 n. 2.

marble stone he had ordained, next to his wives.[267] Every burgess would have expected at least a stone floor slab for their tomb.

For the wealthier, there were other options. At the top of the range was the alabaster effigy on a stone tomb chest: in the late fourteenth century this could cost over £17, a prohibitively expensive option for all but the wealthiest merchant, and for this reason likely to be the most impressive.[268] Three surviving examples of this form that can be firmly linked to named Bristol merchants are the tombs of Walter Frampton (d. 1388) in the church of St John the Baptist, whose reconstruction he funded, and those of William and Joan Canynges, and the Mede family in St Mary Redcliffe. Frampton's alabaster effigy dominates the narrow interior of St John's, and the inscription around the top of the chest announces him as the church's founder: no parishioner could have been in any doubt of this since tomb's first appearance.[269]

The Canynges tomb also commands the space wherein it is set, the south transept of St Mary's, and was doubtless constructed between Joan's death in 1467 and William's in 1474. The couple lie on a tomb chest under an elaborate canopy. The whole edifice was sensitively restored and repainted in the twentieth century, but it probably had an original inscription inviting prayers for William and Joan. The modern decoration includes a repeated merchant's mark, which is probably that used by Canynges, and an heraldic depiction of three moors' heads erased.[270] Next to the tomb is another effigy of William Canynges, this one depicting him in priest's robes as dean of Westbury-on-Trym College. This was made for the college, and probably moved to St Mary's at the Dissolution. Close to the tomb are two floor slabs: one commemorates John Blecker, described as pandoxator and thought to be Canynges's brewer, together with Richard Coke and his wife Tibota; the other, to William Coke, who is described as late servant to William Canynges, is adorned with depictions of a kitchen knife and a colander. That William and Joan should have faced eternity with their cook and brewer for company is a comforting thought.[271]

The Mede tombs take the form of a double tomb chest under an elaborate canopy in St Stephen's Chapel, in the north choir aisle of St Mary's. In the western aperture are the effigies of Philip Mede (d. 1475), three times mayor of Bristol, and his wife Isabel; the next bay is lacking any matching effigies, though clearly designed to contain them, but instead has a brass plate set in the rear panel above the surface of the tomb chest, depicting Philip and Isabel's son Richard (d. 1491), and his two wives Elizabeth and Anne, who predeceased him. Unlike Philip, Richard was never a bailiff, sheriff or mayor, and it is tempting to assume that the family fortune had dwindled by the time of his interment, so that there were insufficient funds to pay for both the kind of effigies that adorned his parents' tomb and for the perpetual chantry established by Richard's will

---

[267] Wadley, *Wills*, 104, 118-9, 149-50.

[268] Nigel Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (OUP, 2009), 58, 110.

[269] I. M. Roper, "Effigies of Bristol", TBGAS, 27 (1904), 51-116, at 79-81.

[270] See Appendix Two. In his restoration of 1938 Professor Tristram based this feature on arms used by members of another branch of the Canynges family, but William did use a single moor's head on his seal (Williams, *Chantries of William Canynges*, 62 n. 2). However, the arms recorded on the tomb in 1904, before its restoration, did not include moors' heads, but rather "argent, three boars heads couped sable": Roper, "Effigies of Bristol", 57. One wonders further if these were in fact dogs' heads, so that they would be a visual pun on "Canynges" and canis.

[271] Roper, "Effigies of Bristol", 55-62; Smith, *St Mary Redcliffe*, 78-9; Nicholas Orme & Jon Cannon, *Westbury-on-Trym: Monastery, Minster and College*, BRS, 62 (2010), 81-3. William Cooke was among William Canynges' servants named in his will: Williams, *Chantries of William Canynges*, 76.

for his soul and the souls of his wives, parents and grandfather Thomas.[272] Richard is depicted as a knight on his brass, in a full harness of armour and an armorial tabard, whereas his father is dressed as a wealthy merchant in his effigy; in his will Richard described himself as gentleman, so his depiction may be indicative of his entry into the world of the gentry and distancing from the mercantile world, which would also help to explain why he did not hold civic office. All three tombs, those of Frampton, Canynges, and Richard Mede, were associated with perpetual chantries established by their occupants, and celebrated close by. The combination of sound and image would have made a powerful impression.[273]

During the course of the fifteenth century relief effigies were becoming relatively less common among urban elites, their place increasingly being taken by brasses.[274] This is apparent in Bristol. Brasses were considerably cheaper: by 1500, depending on the size and complexity, brasses usually cost between £2 and £10.[275] One of the most impressive Bristol examples can be found in St Mary Redcliffe, and commemorates Sir John Juyn (d 1439). Sir John was Recorder of Bristol and Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and his brass carries elegant Latin verses that give his potted biography, from soldier, to recorder, and to chief justice, and call on God, as a just and patient judge, to show mercy to him, who had likewise joined justice with mercy (Justiciam voluit coniuxam cum pietate).[276] Like the tombs of Canynges and Richard Mede, Sir John's carries a coat of arms; this is not unexpected, nor is it surprising that the brass of Richard Mede, gentleman, should show him bearing heraldic arms, but the depiction of arms on purely mercantile figures is more interesting. The combination of heraldry and merchant's mark, indicated on the Canynges tomb by its modern restorer from educated guesswork, is an undoubtedly original feature in the brass of John and Isabella Barstaple, in the chapel of their foundation of Holy Trinity Hospital, and of Thomas Rowley at St John Baptist, while that to John and Joan Jay in St Mary Redcliffe, presents something of a mercantile colonisation of chivalric culture: it has four shields repeating a charge of what appears to be a fuller's bat, together with another shield carrying a merchant's mark.[277]

Contemporaries would have been alive to the subtle messages communicated by such details, reading them as indicating which point on the scale between merchant and gentleman the subject wished to be remembered as having occupied. Sir John Juyn's verse biography is but a more elaborate expression of the desire manifested in a number of memorials to make a lasting impression on the observer's memory of the essence of the person commemorated. Thus, an inscription on the Barstaple tomb

---

[272] Roper, "Effigies of Bristol", 64-6; Smith, *St Mary Redcliffe*, 90-1; Cecil T. Davis, *The Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire* (1899, 1969 edn., Bath: King's Mead), 69-72. There has been some confusion over the identity of the Medes commemorated in these tombs, caused in part by a fragmentary inscription on a strip of brass on the tomb chest of Philip and Isabel Mede, which bears the name of Thomas, but gives Philip's date of death (20 December 1475). The wills of Philip and Richard settle the matter: Philip asked to be buried in St Mary's by the altar of St Stephen the Martyr (Wadley, *Wills*, 157), while in his will Richard asked to be buried at the feet of his parents, Philip and Isabel, on the north side of St Stephen's Chapel, and mentions his two wives, Elizabeth and Anne, who had predeceased him: TNA PROB 11/8/633.

[273] Burgess, "Strategies for Eternity", 28.

[274] Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 111, 248-9.

[275] Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 110.

[276] Smith, *St Mary Redcliffe*, 92; Davis, *Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire*, 37-9.

[277] Davis, *Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire*, 28, 73-81. Rowley's arms were described by Davis (75) as "a hart proper on a field sanguine [sic]": if the hart could actually be interpreted as a roe-deer, then this might have been a pun on the first syllable of the family name.

describe John as a burgess and as fundator isti loci, and a similar description, huius ecclesie fundator is inscribed on Walter Frampton's tomb, while inscriptions on the tombs of Thomas Rowley and John Jay note that they had been sheriffs.[278] Other aspects of the subject's public life could be highlighted, for example, Robert Londe's brass, now lost, depicted him in priest's robes and described him as a chaplain, but it was much more usually the family context that was stressed.[279] Husbands and wives, for the most part, and perhaps naturally, wished to be buried and depicted together. An important part of the identity John and Joan Jay evidently desired to communicate to posterity was related to their brood of six sons and eight daughters, all depicted on their brass.[280] A universal feature of surviving inscriptions is the exhortation to pray for those depicted, or a supplication to God to have mercy on their souls. As Professor Saul has argued, tombs gave such biographical information in order to create a vivid impression of the essence of a person in the memories of passers-by, while the supplications to God would have provided a reminder of the plight of the person's soul, reinforcing the more direct message of orate pro anima/bus. While they had other functions, such as displaying the deceased's social position and providing "solace for the living", monuments were "... an essential weapon in the battle for the salvation of the soul".[281]

Tomb monuments were often combined with stained glass erected nearby to deliver the same message in two different media. Bristol does not furnish any examples of this, because time, redevelopment and war have not been kind to its medieval glass, although fifteenth-century Bristol testators did occasionally leave bequests to pay for glass, such as the 100s. bequeathed by Adam Inhyn to St Mary-le-Port in 1418.[282] The only glass that Worcestre mentions in his Bristol notes was in the chapel of the Assumption of the Virgin on Bristol Bridge: "Memorandum, that Elias Spelly is a burgess of the town of Bristol, and was, with ... . [complete line left blank for inclusion of other names] leading benefactors of the aforesaid chapel, as appears in the glass windows, with the figures of them and their wives in the said windows, to wit Elias Spelly ..."[283] He can perhaps be forgiven for not including all of the donors: one can imagine the elderly Worcestre peering up at the chapel windows, trying, and largely failing, to make out the names of the figures depicted in the glass.

Spectacle, ceremony, the spoken and sung word, texts and images embroidered, painted and inscribed on fabric, metal, glass, wood and stone, all were used in as the means to preserve individual memory in an effort to solicit intercessionary prayers. This effort was concentrated in churches, which were, in part, both "theatres of memory" and prayer factories.[284] However, it was not confined to these spaces. Bristol, like any other town in later medieval Christendom, was peppered with religious houses, hospitals, almshouses, chapels and hermitages, all, to varying degrees, associated with particular individuals and their quest for intercession, so that it would have been impossible to walk more than a few hundred metres without encountering explicitly or implicitly, a plea for prayers. All believers would have been keenly aware that each plea represented one or more souls suffering purgatorial torment, and that, one day, their

[278] Davis, *Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire*, 73-5.
[279] Davis, *Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire*, 58-60; C. E. Boucher, "The Lond or Loud Brass in St Peter's Church, Bristol", TBGAS, 30 (1907), 265-9.
[280] Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 129-39.
[281] Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 120-1.
[282] Wadley, *Wills*, 102.
[283] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 247; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 50-1.
[284] The first phrase comes from Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 141.

own soul would join them. An enormous share of the community's wealth, effort and thought was devoted to serving the needy dead.[285] Beyond those contracted or otherwise obliged to pray for particular individuals, there was a sea of passers-by, casual witnesses whose interest had to be engaged. Parallels with modern advertising are perhaps not entirely inappropriate: in contemporary western culture those who design marketing strategies and advertising campaigns are all too aware that they are in a ruthlessly competitive and over-crowded market. To some extent, so were medieval donors, each one vying from beyond the grave for the attention of potential supplicants. Given the ubiquity of these attempts to claim the attention of the living, and thus to be remembered in their prayers, one could easily imagine that this culture was over-saturated with such pleas. Were fifteenth-century Bristolians showing signs of intercession fatigue?

This is not a question that can be answered at all definitively, but there are ways of at least thinking about it. We can attempt to assess the durability of memory in terms of the preservation of the names of good-doers in benefaction books. Here, there are some impressive cases, such as Alice Hayle, who donated a valuable property, the Green Lattice, to All Saints in 1261 and was still being remembered there up to the eve of the Reformation.[286] However, a different picture emerges from Burgess's analysis of "perpetual" chantry foundations. His conclusion is that, "it is clear that while fifteenth-century chantries had a very good chance of survival, those established in the fourteenth did not. Or to be more precise, although some early foundations did survive, few chantries established before the 1360s survived intact into the mid-sixteenth century".[287] Another way of approaching this question is to return to William Worcestre, and ask what impression these attempts at preserving memory had on him. Before we do this there are some obvious caveats to acknowledge. He was not primarily interested in surveying the products of commemorative activity, and he was not a permanent Bristol resident. Nonetheless, he was both profoundly interested in his birthplace, and an acute, careful and curious observer.

As we have seen, Abbot Newland made full use of St Augustine's obit book for the compilation of his genealogy of the Berkeleys, and this also appears to have been used by William Worcestre, in addition to similar documents from several other Bristol churches.[288] Worcestre noted how an obit book of the Dominicans at Broadmead listed, in addition to the kings of England from Henry III to Edward III, a number of former patrons of the friary, including John Vyell, Bristol's first sheriff, William Curteys, "who had the great cross in the churchyard made", "Matthew de Gurney, one of the founders of the Friars Preachers ...", Sir Maurice and Dame Joan de Berkeley, "who lie in the quire on the left of the altar ...", Sir William Daubeny, "who lies in the quire", "Sir Anselm de Gurney, who lies in the quire ..."; while he also notes that "The heart of Sir Robert de Gurney, ... lies in this church". All of these are assigned a day and month on which they

[285] A point made by Burgess, "Service for the Dead", 206: "It is striking, however, to reflect how high a proportion of Bristol's late medieval citizens would have been intimately involved, perhaps for long periods of their adult lives, with administering services for dead relatives or co-parishioners … With their vivid and repeated funerary re-enactment, anniversaries were among the most insistent reminders that the dead were hardly less than present in a parish and that they be accorded their dues … In a late medieval parish in a relatively wealthy town, the living must constantly have been aware of the present of 'all the faithful departed'".

[286] *Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints, Bristol, I*, ed. Burgess, xxii; *Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints, Bristol, III*, ed. Burgess , 9-10, 358, 402.

[287] Burgess, "Strategies for Eternity", 29.

[288] *Topography*, no. 327.

died and are to be prayed for, but with one exception not the year of their death. The exception is "1429 Brother William Botoner died 15th December [that] year"; presumably Brother William was one of Worcestre's relations, in which case the year of his death might have been supplied from family memory.[289] Similar information appears to have been gleaned from obit books at St Thomas's parish church, and St Katherine's Hospital chapel.[290]

The preservation of their name in the collective memory was one benefit accruing to the founders of religious institutions. As we have seen, the memory of Robert fitz Harding and his descendants was kept alive at St Augustine's over a period of more than three hundred years, in part at least through obit books and other documentary means of preservation. The size of St Augustine's endowment made it unique in Bristol, but there were other aristocratic foundations nearby.[291] Among them, the priory of St James was founded by Robert, Earl of Gloucester, probably in 1129, making it older than St Augustine's.[292] The hospitals of St Bartholomew and of St Mark's were founded on the north bank of the Frome in the first third of the thirteenth century by, respectively, the de la Warre and Gaunt/Gournay families, both of whom were linked to the Fitzharding lords of Berkeley; the de la Warres also founded the chapel of St Anne, in nearby Brislington, that became an important local shrine and pilgrimage destination.[293] From Worcestre's Topography we can get a sense of the effectiveness of these foundations in preserving their founders' memory within the wider Bristol community, that is, beyond the personnel of the institutions themselves.

The picture is somewhat mixed. Worcestre visited St Augustine's Abbey and St Mark's Hospital, but these visits evidently did not bring to mind their founders.[294] He does state that Matthew de Gournay was one of the founders of the Dominican Friary in Broadmead, and that Robert de Berkeley founded St Katherine's Hospital in Bedminster, but in both cases this knowledge was drawn not from collective memory but from the obit books he found in those institutions.[295] He did not know that St Lawrence's Hospital had been founded by King John when he was count of Mortain.[296] The de la Warre foundations made more of an impression. Twice Worcestre notes that St Bartholomew's Hospital had been a priory of regular Augustinian canons and was now a hospital for the poor, and he knew that it had been "founded by the ancestors of Lord De La Warr", but it was their other foundation, St Anne's Chapel, that clearly impressed him more.[297] He took the two-mile journey to Brislington, where he noted that "A certain Lord de le Warr first founded the chapel of Saint Anne"; however, he was at first in some doubt as to the identity of the founder, originally writing Abbas de Abbathia de

[289] *Topography*, no. 286.
[290] *Topography*, nos 417, 470-1.
[291] Medieval Bristol's religious houses (monastic houses, hospitals and almshouses) are conveniently listed, with dates of foundation and names of founders/principal benefactors, in Price & Ponsford, *St Bartholomew's Hospital*, 19.
[292] Reg Jackson, *Excavations at St James's Priory, Bristol, Bristol and Region Archaeological Services Monograph* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2006), 8-9.
[293] Price & Ponsford, *St Bartholomew's Hospital*, 20-4, 198-214; *Cartulary of St Mark's Hospital*, ed. Ross xii-xxvii; W. J. Pountney, *Old Bristol Potteries, being an Account of the Old Potters and Potteries of Bristol and Brislington, between 1650 and 1850, with some Pages on the Old Chapel of St. Anne, Brislington* (Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1920).
[294] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 74, 327, 464; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 46-8.
[295] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 286, 470; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 48-50. For St Katherine's Hospital, see Price & Ponsford, *St Bartholomew's Hospital*, 199, 206-30.
[296] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 186.
[297] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 177, 382; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 48-9, 51.

Keynysham ff, which he then deleted, in favour of Dominus de le Warr written above and partly in the margin. He measured the chapel, as was his wont, and was interested in the large candles given by the Weavers' and Cordwainers' guilds, but he was particularly taken with the votive offerings of model ships made to St Anne, a patron saint of sailors:

> And there are in the said chapel 32 boats and little boats (naves & navicule), and some carracks (caracis navibus).And, of the boats fashioned and made out of silver, there are 5 boats, the value of each boat 20s.[298]

The aristocratic founders of these twelfth and thirteenth-century houses appear to have been distant, shadowy figures to Worcestre. He seems rather more confident in his treatment of the mercantile foundations of the fourteenth and fifteenth-centuries, but there are still lacunae in his knowledge. For example, he appears to have had a temporary lapse of memory when it came to the church of St John the Baptist and the adjoining gateway in the town wall; this is what Worcestre has to say of them in one note:

> The parish church of St John Baptist with the vaulted crypt, together with the chapel of Holy Cross, below: in which church a famous merchant, burgess of the aforesaid town, lies in a tomb [with] an effigy upon it; and he caused to be newly built and constructed both the church and the fine gateway, together with the tower and the high spire of freestone, with the ring of bells, on top.

That he does not give Walter Frampton's name suggests that this was because he could not recall it at that point, despite this information being given on Frampton's tomb, but in another note on the church and gateway he is able to state that both were built, "by Walter Frampton, a worthy (nobile[m]) merchant of the town of Bristol".[299]

Worcestre had similar problems with Holy Trinity Hospital, near Lawford's Gate, founded by John Barstaple between 1395 and 1417.[300] Despite in one place noting the date of Barstaple's death, on 17 September 1411, from an obit book, and that "…he had Nicholas Barstable master of the priests of the chapel of the Holy Trinity", elsewhere Worcestre shows that he was unsure of the exact identity of the founder:

> …the hospital of Holy Trinity, [founded] by a most highly respected merchant formerly of the town of Bristol -to the said church of the Holy Trinity, foundedand built by [blank] Barstaple, for 13 poor men...The hospital building and chapel, in Old Market next to Lawford's Gate, with a fitting chapel, was founded and built by the said [blank] Barstaple…. the hospital of Holy Trinity, founded by Walter Barstaple...[my italics][301]

On the other hand, he did know who had founded the chapels of Thomas Knapp, on the Back at the Rackhay, and of Richard Spicer, that is, the Chapel of St George, next to the Guildhall, as well as the almshouse of William Canynges in Lewin's Mead, although he did not know the first name of William Spencer, who as a Canynges's executor had brought the house into being, noting that it had been, "founded by [blank] Spencer,

---

[298] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 83, p. 57, n. g.
[299] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 355, 176; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 33-4.
[300] Leighton, "Trinity Hospital", 251-5.
[301] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 131, 184, 188. Worcestre was evidently unaware that his great uncle and aunt, Simon and Margaret Canynges, had been among those whose souls were to be prayed for in the chapel: see above, n. 27.

merchant and burgess of the town, out of the estate of Sir William Canynges, Dean of the College of Westbury, and about the year of Christ 1478". In addition, the memory of John Leycestre, a Bristol merchant who had died in 1437, seems to have been preserved by a door he had built in St Stephen's, which Worcestre describes as "…old Leicester's door on the north side of the church tower".[302]

The extent to which such buildings were memorable to Worcestre because of their religious or charitable associations, as opposed to simply being notable architectural features, is unknowable, but clearly some individuals were remembered through their associations with particularly impressive houses or other structures which were obviously purely secular, and it is useful to consider these as a context for assessing the effectiveness of religious strategies of remembrance. Worcestre seems to have been particularly impressed by the tower-houses that he encountered along the inner town wall. This wall had long since ceased to have much defensive value, and some of the towers had been converted into desirable, luxury residences. Among these was "Vyell's Place", a large square tower on the Quayside, built by John Vyell (d. 1398/9) but in 1480 the home of Henry Vyell. Worcestre's interest in this house and its occupants may not have been prompted solely by its impressive appearance, since he had links with the Vyell family.[303] Another tower stood on the Avon quayside at the end of the Redcliffe mansion formerly of William Canynges; Worcestre notes this, but he was more interested in the recently deceased's business, civic, political and ecclesiastical careers.[304] Canynges had only died in 1474, so his memory was still very fresh, but other individuals brought to mind by their former residences belonged to earlier generations. Worcestre noted the "great garden and orchard" of Mark William, mayor in 1422-3, and the house on St Peter's Street, "where [blank] Oliver, the jurist (jurus peritus), Recorder of Bristol, dwelt". In the 1390s the Recorder, Simon Oliver, was steward to Richard II's queen, Anne of Bohemia; he died in 1419, and his descendants continued to occupy this house until at least the 1430s.[305] Mark William was a prominent figure, and one can imagine Oliver still being talked about, during Worcestre's late childhood and youth in Bristol.

Within the confines of such a brief and limited discussion it is of course impossible to reach firm conclusions on the efficacy of institutions of intercessionary

---

[302] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 49 (Leycestre), 219-20, 252, 260, 342 (Knapp); 384 (Spicer); 401 (Canynges); Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 37, 51. The rebuilding of the tower of St Stephen's is usually credited to John Shipward, who lived nearby, but Worcestre does not mention this.

[303] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 369, 391, 393; no. 395 records that Worcestre had been granted a rent of £4 by John Torynton and a John Vyell, now deceased, who may have been the son of the John Vyell who built the tower house on the Key, and who made his will in 1398. This was proved in 1399 in his house on the Key, and in it he mentions his tenement on Broad Street occupied by Thomas Botoner: Wadley, *Wills*, 57.

[304] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 390, 440-1. For Canynges see below.

[305] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 188, 190, 297, p. 173 n. 1; Leech, *Topography*, 111. Mark William had bequeathed 100 marks to the town for the purchase of corn in times of scarcity, as witnessed by an indenture made between the mayor and his executors in 1434, copied into the *LRBB* (vol. 1, 174-7; see also L. S. Woodgar, "William (formerly Spaynell), alias William Markes, Mark (d.c. 1434), of Bristol", in *HPHC, 1386-1421* [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/william-mark-alias-william-markes-1434]); this, if nothing else, would have helped keep his memory alive. Similarly, John Smyth's civic munificence ensured the survival of his memory in Bury St Edmunds: Mark Merry, "'Specyall Lover and Preferrer of the Polytike and Common Weale': John Smyth and Ideal Citizenship in Fifteenth-Century Bury St Edmunds", in *Negotiating the Political in Northern European Urban Society, c.1400-c.1600*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2013), 17-44.

prayer as mnemonic strategies, that is, as the means by which the memory of deceased individuals or groups was kept alive. However, sufficient evidence has been adduced to suggest that their success should not simply be assumed. As Burgess's work has shown, even the sort of contractual arrangements that underpinned perpetual chantries could not always be relied upon to ensure their intended aims. Appeal to passers-by would naturally have been much more haphazard, and equally obviously, what lodges in individuals' memories cannot be predicted or constrained.

Fifteenth-century Bristolians constructed their models of the past from various materials. What we today would call "myth" existed as both "elite" (Brennius) and "popular" (Ghyst) traditions (but there was probably no hard and fast distinction between these two). What we would call "history", derived from chronicles, either national or local, produced only fragmentary, partial narratives, and in the case of Bristol's history this tended not to extend beyond a few past generations. Legal or administrative precedent could reach further back, into the early thirteenth century, but this appears not to have been widely regarded as providing primary sources for historical research. Individual memory was expected to carry more weight, and to be more authoritative, than is usually the case today, and the agglomeration of fragments of individual memory into popular, or public, and family memory gave the opportunity for their preservation beyond a single lifetime. Finally, eschatological commemoration, the establishment and maintenance of structures to preserve the memory of individuals or groups in the hope of prompting intercessionary prayers, played a very important role in pre-Reformation culture, in Bristol as elsewhere, although the mechanisms by which this was to be achieved were far from perfect. To expect Ricart, Worcestre and their contemporaries to regard these disparate discourses as the raw material for historical research would of course be hopelessly anachronistic. Instead, each was used and valued for its own specific, discrete purpose: to account for physical remnants from the past, to instill civic patriotism, obedience and conformity, to encourage individuals to defend the town's liberties, and to provide them with the means to do so, to satisfy antiquarian and familial curiosity, to give a sense of individual connection with other kin, to ease the passage of souls through Purgatory and, by so doing, to maintain connections between the living and the dead. Contemporaries probably did not feel too exposed or inconvenienced by what we would regard as their hazy and partial notions of their historic past. Beyond the functions just listed, this may well not have seemed important. The history that was important, that told in the Bible, was known, and understood insofar as it was necessary for salvation: in that sense, they had a very firm and secure model of the past. They had a similarly clear notion of what really mattered regarding the future: whatever might befall them in their own lifetimes on Earth, the crucially important facts were already known, since nearly everyone shared a common notion of the possible fates awaiting their immortal souls. Sandwiched between the distant past of Biblical history and the post-mortem eschatological future, both of which were secure and assured as articles of faith, the relatively more recent past of European History beyond living memory was shadowy, and temporal futures unknowable and disconcertingly uncertain.

Access to this past would have varied according to the individual's socio-economic class, educational background and profession. Those existing within a literate milieu, being able to benefit from the written word, either directly, by reading, or indirectly by having texts read to them, would have had a different notion of their past from that of someone excluded from such elites, for whom memory and oral tradition would have been of much more importance. The former, of course, have left a far

greater impression on the historical record than the latter. This disparity in the character of fifteenth-century Bristolians' temporal conceptions is likely to have been matched by a divergence in their conceptions of space, again based on socio-economic class, and such factors as occupation and gender, but operating in different ways. The following section addresses these questions.

SECTION TWO:

SPACE

Chapter Four: The World Beyond the Sea

Every tide brought reminders of the world beyond the sea to fifteenth-century Bristol. Writing of the 'Blackstones', an outcrop of rocks in the middle of the Severn Estuary, William Worcestre observed that:

> …when the tide begins to rise from the Severn towards Bristol past Kingroad, Hungroad and past Ghyston Cliff and … the said small rocksare covered by the sea; and … thus on the turn of the tide, all the ships at the Hollowbacks (from Spain, Portugal, Bordeaux, Bayonne, Gascony,Aquitaine, Brittany, Iceland, Ireland, Wales and other countries) weigh their anchors and set sail towards Bristol.[306]

The purpose of this chapter is not to examine in detail the overseas trade of fifteenth-century Bristol, a task already expertly undertaken by, among others, E. M. Carus Wilson and Wendy Childs, but rather to discuss how that trade, and Bristolians' attempts to expand it, brought them into contact with peoples and places beyond the shores of Britain and Ireland.[307] In some cases those endeavours brought them beyond the boundaries of contemporary European geographical knowledge. In addition, it will briefly consider the nature and experiences of Bristol's alien communities composed of immigrants from the regions with which Bristol traded, since their presence offered another way in which Bristolians could learn about the wider world.

Bristol is particularly interesting as a subject for such an investigation. Unlike some port towns, such as Southampton, the bulk of Bristol's overseas commerce was in the hands of its own merchants, rather than aliens, and even when not carried out in Bristol ships, the fact that it was usually Bristolians making contracts with outsiders to buy and sell meant that they were nonetheless in regular contact with their counterparts in distant regions.[308] Those regions encompassed South-West Europe (primarily Gascony, Castile, and Portugal) but also Iceland. In addition, Bristolians from the mid-fifteenth century were searching for new markets, a search that brought some of them into the Mediterranean and some, most famously, to America. These endeavours could conceivably be seen as reactions, short and long term, direct and indirect, to the final loss of Gascony in 1453: the shattering of a relatively comfortable and stable trading relationship that had lasted for 300 years might have given a new stimulus to the remaining, old-established trade patterns, and encouraged the search for new markets.

Traditional Markets: Gascony and Iberia

In the 300 years from the mid-twelfth century until the mid-fifteenth Gascony was held by the kings of England, and during this period trade with this large and wealthy region was crucial to Bristol's prosperity. Cloth was the one commodity that fifteenth-century England produced for which there was a great demand in the rest of Western Europe.

---

[306] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 406.

[307] In particular: E. M. Carus-Wilson, "The Overseas Trade of Bristol", in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. E. Power, and M. M. Postan (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1933), 183-246; W. R. Childs, *Anglo-Castilian Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester: MUP , 1978), passim. Some of the material in this chapter has also been used in my "Looking out from the Edge of the World: Bristol, Gascony and Iberia in the Later Middle Ages", in *Gentes de mar en la ciudad atlántica medieval*, ed. Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Michel Bochaca & Amélia Aguiar Andrade (Institutio de Estudios Riojanos, Logroño, 2012), 149-66.

[308] For Southampton and its Italian merchant community, see Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 152-7.

West-Country cloth, including Bristol broadcloth, was particularly desirable. Bristol was a major cloth exporter. For the fifteenth century as a whole Bristol's average annual customed cloth export – that is, to mainland Europe and Ireland - was around 4110 cloths, around a mere 20 per cent of London's total, and 75 per cent of Southampton's, but nearly three times that of Exeter over the same period.[309] In return for cloth, Bristol ships left with French wine and other products of southern Europe, particularly woad, an important dyestuff.[310] Over the course of the fifteenth century Bristol imported an annual average of around 1500 tons of Gascon or Iberian wine; this was about half the figure for London's non-sweet wine imports, but over three times that for Southampton.[311] Bordeaux was the main Gascon port, situated at the mouth of the Gironde, with Bayonne as its lesser neighbour.

The loss of Gascony in 1453 had a serious short-term impact on Bristol's economy.[312] It came in the middle of a long period of economic depression in England, and the third quarter of the fifteenth century was a particularly difficult period. Charles VII of France took punitive action against Bordeaux and prohibited trade with England. The figures from Bristol's customs accounts tell a clear story: wine imports were down from a high point of 2,457 tons in 1444-5 to a mere 274 tons in 1460-1, while broadcloth exports declined from 7,546 cloths in 1447-8 to 1,214 in 1460-1.[313] After 1461 the new French king, Louis XI, ameliorated conditions somewhat, and commerce between Gascony and England was allowed, under certain restrictions, from 1463, and these restrictions were eased further by the Treaty of Picquigny, in 1475. Even after 1475, however, trade with Gascony still took place with a foreign, and potentially hostile, land. Licences had to be bought for each voyage, and merchants faced increased dangers from piracy.[314]

One important long-term result of these new, more difficult conditions in France was a re-alignment of Bristol's continental trade. Trade with Castile and Portugal, already well-established but of much less significance than that with Gascony, became more important, despite England's intermittently difficult diplomatic relations with the Spanish realm. Bristol's Spanish imports included dried fruit, olive oil and, of course, wine, from the south-west ports of Silves, Faro, Seville, Huelva and Sanlúcar de Barrameda, and iron from the north-east ports of Bilbao, San Sebastián, Fuenterrabía and Santander. The Portuguese trade, centred on Porto and Lisbon, encompassed wine, oil, fruit, salt, dyestuffs, wax and cork, but the Bristol-Portugal trade was shrinking

[309] Based on Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. I, 261-2, Table II.
[310] Yves Renouard, Les Relations de Bordeaux et de Bristol, *Revue Historique de Bordeaux et du Département de la Gironde*, 7 (1957), 103-6, 111. Norwich's export of cloth and import of dyestuffs, particularly woad, among other materials necessary for textile production, is broadly comparable: Penelope Dunn, "Trade", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. Carole Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (London: Hambledon & London, 2002), 213-34, at 221-2.
[311] Based on Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. I, 267-8, Table III.
[312] For the problems and inconveniences caused to Bristol merchants by the first and second falls of Bordeaux, 1450-53, see *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, nos 104-8. In 1477/8 the "merchaunts adventures" of Bristol complained to the mayor and common council that the loss of Gascony had disrupted the ordered supply and regulation of woad coming into Bristol, and proposed a set of restrictions on the trade: *GRBB*, *Text, Part III*, 120-3.
[313] H. L.Gray, "Tables of Enrolled Customs and Subsidy Accounts, 1399-1482", in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. E. Power and M. M. Postan (London: Routledge, 1933), 334-5; M. K. James, *Studies in the Medieval Wine Trade*, ed. E. M. Veale (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 112-15.
[314] Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 211-13.

relative to that between Bristol and the Spanish ports.[315] The importance of Bristol's Spanish trade in the later fifteenth century is illustrated by the customs accounts of 1485-6: in that year Spain took 54% of the port's total cloth exports, and supplied 21% of wine imports. By 1512-13 Spain accounted for 77% of both cloth exports and wine imports.[316]

The transport of pilgrims, going to and from Santiago de Compostella in Galicia was another part of Bristol's Spanish trade. In the 1390s Bristol was a port of embarkation for pilgrims, even though Dover and Plymouth were supposed to be the only ports from which they should sail.[317] This restriction was eventually relaxed, and from 1416 travellers wishing to go abroad had to procure a licence from the Crown. So, from that year onwards the licences procured by Bristol merchants to ship pilgrims to Santiago give an indication of the size of the port's pilgrim trade. In 1428 five licences were granted to Bristol ships to take a total of 460 pilgrims to Santiago. In 1434, six licences were granted to carry 330 pilgrims.[318] A notable entrepreneur in the pilgrim trade was Robert Sturmy, a leading Bristol merchant and ship owner. In 1445 he was licensed to carry 200 pilgrims to Santiago in the cog St Anne. In 1456 he was again licensed to take 60 pilgrims. However, these two voyages came either side of an enterprising, but disastrous, pilgrim voyage organised by Sturmy in 1446, intended to take Bristol's pilgrim trade into the Mediterranean. The story was told 34 years later by William Worcestre:

> …in the month of July … Robert Sturmy, merchant of the town of Bristol, began his voyage from the port of Bristol …to Jerusalem,with about 160 pilgrims; and sailing by Seville, going to the port ofJaffa [Tel-Aviv] and to Jerusalem. And on returning towards England by the island of Modon [Methoni, in the Peleponnese?] [caught]unexpectedly off-guard by a sudden tempest and strong wind springingup in the black and murky night on the 23rd day of December, his shipcalled the Cog Anne was driven aground on a rock, and 37 men andseamen were drowned, to the great sorrow of their friends at Bristol, and of their wives. But a certain devout bishop of Modon in Greece caused the bodies of the 37

[315] Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 214-24. J. C. Geouge, "Anglo-Portuguese Trade during the Reign of João I of Portugal, 1385-1433", in *England and Iberia in the Middle Ages, 12th-15th Century*, ed. M. Bullón-Fernández (New York & Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, , 2007), 119-33. T. V. De Faria & Flávio Miranda, "'Pur Bone Alliance et Amiste Faire': Diplomacia e Comercio entre Portugal e Inglaterra no final da Idade Média", *Cultura, Espaço & Memoria: Revista do Centro de Investigação Transdiciplinar*, 1 (2010), 109-27 (I am very grateful to Dr Flávio Miranda for giving me a copy of this article); Flávio Miranda, "The Portuguese and the Sea: Urban Interaction and Exchange in the Late Middle Ages", in *Gentes de mar*, ed. Telechea, Bochaca & Andrade, 275-92; idem, "Before the Empire: Portugal and the Atlantic Trade in the Late Middle Ages", *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 5 (2013), 1-17, at 3-5, 7-9. For the northern Spanish ports see J. A. Solórzano Telechea, "Medieval Seaports of the Atlantic Coast of Spain", *International Journal of Maritime History*, 21:1 (2009), 81-100. I am grateful to Jesús Solórzano Telechea for giving me a copy of this article.

[316] G. Connell-Smith, *Forerunners of Drake: A Study of English Trade with Spain in the Early Tudor Period* (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1954), 34, 61.

[317] TNA, SC8/21/1030.

[318] Carus-Wilson, *Overseas Trade*, nos 56-60, 66-71, 92, 122; Anthony Goodman, *Margery Kemp and her World* (London: Longman, 2002), 248, n. 5. Margery Kempe, a mystic from King's Lynn, sailed from Bristol on pilgrimage to Santiago in 1417: *The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. B. A. Windeatt (London: Penguin, 1985), 143-8. A Coruña was the nearest port to Santiago de Compostela, and so was the usual destination for Bristol pilgrim ships. In 1456 the governors of A Coruña and a group of Bristol merchants negotiated an agreement of reciprocal free access to their ports: *Jacobean Pilgrims from England to St James of Compostela, from the Early Twelfth to the Late Fifteenth Century*, ed. Constance Mary Storrs (Santiago de Compostela: Xacobeo Galicia/Xunta de Galicia, 1994), 193-6.

aforesaid dead men to be honourably buried, andhe newly founded a holy chapel there, to pray for their souls and [those] of all the faithful departed.[319]

This section is concerned not with the volumes of trade between Bristol and its trading partners, nor with the total value or quantity of cargoes carried, these matters having been fully discussed by Carus-Wilson, among others. Rather, it is concerned with the nature and frequency of Bristolians' contacts with merchants and sailors from France and Iberia. Bristol did not have the equivalent of Southampton's community of Italian merchants, nor London's Italian and Hanseatic merchants. Bristol's links with the rest of Northern Europe were slight. Whereas most English ports trading with Spain, at least after 1477, conducted their commerce through intermediaries, via the Netherlands, Bristol traded directly. The dominance of Bristol's own merchants in its Spanish trade can be demonstrated with reference to the data from the customs accounts of 1485-6. In that year English merchants, predominantly Bristolians, shipped 96% of Bristol's cloth exports to Spain, and 95% of its imports of Spanish wine, and 86% of all other commodities.[320]

While Bristol's merchants may have formed the largest proportion of those trading through the port, they did not need to use Bristol ships to do so. Some indication of the relative proportion of Bristol and foreign ships using the port can be gleaned from the customs accounts, which generally give the home port for each vessel carrying merchandise liable for custom payments. The following table summarises this data for a sample of customs returns from the period 1390 to 1480.[321]

Table I: Home Ports of Vessels Paying Customs at Bristol, 1390-1480

	Year of Customs Account				
	1390/1	1437	1461	1479/80	Total
Bristol	54 65.0%	10 52.6%	8 21.6%	46 25.0%	118 36.5%
Other English Ports	10 12.0%	3 15.8%	13 35.1%	18 9.8%	44 13.6%
Wales	2 2.4%	1 5.2%	10 27.0%	33 17.9%	46 14.2%
Ireland	12 14.4%	0 0.0%	2 5.4%	38 20.7%	52 16.1%
France	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	30 16.3%	30 9.3%
Iberia*	2 2.4%	3 15.8%	4 10.8%	13 7.1%	22 6.8%
N. Europe*	3 3.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 0.9%

[319] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 248. Rome was another possible pilgrimage destination for Bristolians: in 1450 John Gosslyn and in 1493 William de la Fount made their wills before setting out for Rome: Wadley, Wills, 133-4, 170-1.

[320] Connell-Smith, *Forerunners of Drake*, 9-10, 32-4.

[321] *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 180 f.

Unidentified	0 0.0%	2 10.5%	0 0.0%	6 3.3%	8 2.5%
Total	83	19	37	184	323

* Iberia = 'Spain' & Portugal; N. Europe = Netherlands, Baltic ports etc

The considerable variations between the four accounts warn us not put too much trust in any individual return. The data represent voyages, not individual vessels, and since vessels involved in shorter voyages, to ports in Wales, England or Ireland, would tend to reappear more frequently in the customs accounts, they will be relatively over-represented compared to ships engaged in continental trade. Also, it should be remembered that these data reflect individual voyages rather than the value of cargoes transported. Ships involved in the continental trade tended to be much bigger than those sailing between British and Irish ports, and therefore to have carried larger consignments of what in any case tended to be higher value commodities. The total value of cargoes carried between Bristol and continental ports greatly outweighed that of Bristol's Irish and coastal trades. The object of this exercise is to get some sense not of the overall value of voyages, but of their frequency. Individual ships have not been counted because it is often unclear if two or more mentions of a ship of the same name refer to the same vessel.[322] Despite these caveats it is clear that voyages in Bristol ships made up the largest single component (36% of voyages) of those using the port in the ninety years from 1390 to 1480. Ships from mainland Europe made around 17% of voyages, but for the reasons just given, this is probably an underestimate of the proportion of foreign vessels involved.

Taking one year as an example for closer scrutiny, in 1479-80 the vast majority of voyages in Bristol's own ships were to and from Ireland, not mainland Europe: there were ten sailings out to Ireland, and nine in the opposite direction. Iberia made up the next most frequent trading partner, with three voyages to Spain, and two to Lisbon, two from Spain and three from Lisbon. Next came France, with one outward voyage and five inward voyages by Bristol ships. Finally, there were two voyages to Iceland. However, in 1479/80 nearly one quarter of Bristol voyages took place in vessels with home ports in mainland Europe, not Bristol, and this was part of a long-term decline in the proportion of Bristol-owned shipping that is obscured by crude averages taken from across the whole ninety-year period.

This trend is apparent in both the French and Iberian trades. The absence of any French ships from the customs data before the 1479/80 account can probably be explained by a number of factors: before 1453 few of the exports from Gascony were carried in Gascon ships, and English merchants importing into Gascony could do so free of custom, while between that year and 1463 Gascon ships were banned from the English trade.[323] This situation changed thereafter. Notarial records from Bordeaux for the period 1472 to 1520 show a marked decline in Bristol-owned shipping, and a concomitant rise in French-owned ships. Over this 48-year period only nineteen

[322] *Bristol's Trade with Ireland and the Continent, 1503-1601,* ed. Susan Flavin & Evan T. Jones, BRS, 61 (2009), xiv-xv. In the early 16th century Bristol's merchant fleet numbered between 18 and 25 vessels: Evan Jones, "The *Matthew* of Bristol and the Financiers of John Cabot's 1497 Voyage to North America", *EHR*, 121 (2006), 778-95, at 784-6, 794-5. I am very grateful to Dr Jones for his help in interpreting the data for Bristol shipping.

[323] E. M. Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (London: Methuen, 1954), 33-6. For the 14th and 15th centuries as a whole, bordelais ships constituted only c. 2% of those used on the Bristol-Bordeaux run: Renouard, "Les relations de Bordeaux et de Bristol", 111.

voyages from Bordeaux are recorded as taking place employing Bristol ships (21 if nearby Berkeley is included), giving an average of only one voyage every 2.5 years. By contrast, other ports on England's south coast are well represented. However, this does not mean that trade with Bristol was insignificant. Bristol featured as a destination in 38 recorded voyages in this period, and at least 31 voyages carried cargoes shipped by Bristol merchants, but relatively few of these were in Bristol ships.[324]

After 1460, Castilians on the north coast of Spain, predominantly Basques, were quickly establishing themselves as the major ship-owners in Bristol's trade with this area. Many Basques were also to be found on Bristol-Bordeaux voyages, and from 1480 they would increase their presence in the Portuguese trade.[325] In 1485-6, of the twelve ships recorded in the customs accounts as coming from Spain to Bristol, eight (66%) were Spanish, as were 17 of the 23 ships (74%) sailing from Bristol to Spain. The majority of the English ships on this outward journey were bound for southern Spain. The early-Tudor navigation acts and the treaty of Medina del Campo, which restricted the amount of English trade carried out in foreign hulls, appear to have had some effect on this picture: in 1492-3 Spanish ships accounted for 15 of the 26 vessels (58%) coming to Bristol from Spain, and 15 of the 23 (65%) going in the opposite direction, broadly similar to 1485-6; but in 1503-4, after these trade restrictions had been implemented, the equivalent numbers of Spanish ships had fallen to four out of 22 incoming (18%) and three out of nine (33%) outgoing. The decline in the overall number of Spanish voyages, from 49 in 1492/3 to 31 in 1503/4, was probably another consequence of these diplomatic manoeuvres.[326]

Bristol merchants remained dominant, even if they were increasingly using foreign ships, but they did not have a monopoly of the port's French and Iberian trade. For example, in 1479/80 forty-eight alien merchants shipped through Bristol, of whom eighteen were also ships' masters.[327] In that year one Bristol ship, the John, had a foreign master, Martin de Lana of Spain: it sailed once from Bordeaux to Bristol and twice from Bristol to northern Spain. In the Bordeaux voyage Martin de Lana shipped his own cargo of iron alongside the cargoes of wine and iron shipped by Bristol merchants; in the first Spanish voyage Martin de Lana's ship carried cloth owned by another Spaniard, called Martin Herson in the customs account, and a cargo of onions shipped by a Spanish factor and attorney of the English nobleman Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex.[328] On these two Spanish voyages Bristol merchants also shipped large cargoes of cloth.

Iberian and French ships using Bristol regularly carried cargoes shipped by alien merchants, usually, but not invariably, from the country of origin of the ship, but there were exceptions, such as a Spanish merchant shipping in a French ship, for example.[329] While some continental vessels embarked on voyages with cargoes entirely supplied by alien merchants, usually these ships carried mixed cargoes, shipped by English and continental merchants, or even carried only English merchants' cargoes. In addition, a

---

[324] J. Bernard, *Navires et gens de mer a Bordeaux (vers 1400-1550)*, 3 vols. (Paris : S.E.V.P.E.N., 1968), vol. 2, 508, vol. 3, 14-493.

[325] Childs, *Anglo-Castilian Trade*, 156-7; W. Childs, "Commercial Relations between the Basque Provinces and England in the Later Middle Ages, c. 1200-c.1500", *Itsas Memoria*, 4 (2003), 58-63.

[326] Connell-Smith, *Forerunners of Drake*, 34, 42, 53.

[327] *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 218 f.

328 *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 240, 249, 283. In addition to Spain, Essex exported cargoes of onions to Bordeaux, Harfleur, La Rochelle and Bayonne, as well as Welsh cloth to Lisbon.

[329] For example, the Spanish merchant Janicot de Fountrabi shipping in a ship of San Jean de Luz: *Overseas Trade*, Carus-Wilson, 55.

few Bristol ships carried the cargoes of alien merchants alongside Bristolians' cargoes.[330] This complex mixture of Bristol and foreign merchants, ships, and crews, suggests that there were reasonably high levels of communication and co-operation between Bristolians and their French and Iberian counterparts. While we should not forget that there could also be ruthless competition and sometimes violent hostility, those involved in the commerce across the Bay of Biscay did, to some degree, constitute a community of shared experience.

An indication of the port of Bristol's reputation among Biscayan and Atlantic maritime communities is perhaps provided by a story about the discovery of Madeira, whose earliest witness occurs in sixteenth-century Iberian manuscripts. According to this tale, the island was accidentally discovered in the reign of Edward III by a pair of English lovers, Robert Machin, or Machim, a knight, and Anne de Arfet, a noblewoman, who were shipwrecked there after fleeing from an attempt to marry Anne off to what was deemed a more suitable partner, "un noble de Bristol", by her relatives. They had boarded a ship in Bristol which was bound for Spain, and persuaded the master to take them to France en route, but storms drove their ship to Madeira.[331]

Bristol merchants involved in the French and Iberian trades would, generally speaking, have had a broad knowledge of the area and of its people. However, the decline in the numbers of Bristol ships in Gascon and Iberian ports in the second half of the fifteenth century was accompanied by the growing concentration of the trade in the hands of a small number of very substantial merchants, and their increasing use of factors and attorneys. Rather than facing the perils of overseas travel themselves, these merchants increasingly employed others to accompany cargoes and buy and sell in foreign ports, while they remained at home, making business deals at a distance.[332] The factors could be apprentice merchants, or fully-fledged merchants who traded on others' behalf as a sideline to their own businesses.[333] While it was vital for the merchants who employed factors to have access to the best possible business intelligence about the areas with which they traded, their use of agents may nonetheless have decreased their direct, personal experience. Quite possibly, a substantial merchant might serve part of his apprenticeship abroad, but thereafter have little if any personal contact with the region.

Factors could be involved in complex business relations. In 1505 the Bristolian Thomas Pynson, factor to John Colas, a Bristol merchant, delivered to another Bristol merchant, John Meyssan, at Bordeaux, an account book and other documents that had belonged to Anthony Houlder, now deceased, a former factor of Colas, and he requested Meyssan to recover certain other books that Houlder had left at Fuenterrabía in Spain. In the words of Jacques Bernard, La représentation commerciale forme ici une chaîne de

---

[330] *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 232, 261.

[331] The story is re-told and discussed in C. Varela, *Ingleses en España y Portugal, 1480-1515: Aristocratas, Mercaderes e Impostores* (Lisboa: Edições Colibri Historia, 1998), 23-37. For Robert Machin/m, see Felipe Fernández-Armisto, "Machim, Robert (supp. fl. 14th cent.)", *ODNB* [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17535, accessed 06/05/11].

[332] Bernard, *Navires et Gens de Mer*, vol. 2, 538-9. Another aspect of the greater specialisation of Bristol's commercial activity is the emergence of a class of shipowners, who derived the bulk of their income from hiring out their vessels to other merchants, of whom William Canynges is the prime example: Sherborne, *William Canynges*, 9, 11-12.

[333] An example of the last is Nicholas Palmer, a Bristol merchant trading in Andalucía in the 1470s on behalf of Moses Contereyn, a Gascon refugee based in Bristol. Contereyn also employed a factor in Bordeaux: *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, nos 193, 196; eadem, "Overseas Trade", 214-5.

plusieurs maillons.[334] Factors could live in a foreign port for years, and even marry and raise a family there, such as Thomas Hoper, factor to Robert Russell of Bristol, who by 1424 had lived in Bayonne for four years, where he had married a local woman.[335]

While Anglo-French relations continued to be tense, even after 1475, those between France and Castile were also far from harmonious. By 1478 Bristol merchants had so established themselves in Castile that they were able to act as agents for cloth merchants from Bayonne and Guyenne who bought merchandise at Bordeaux for sale in Fuenterrabía and elsewhere in Spain, but who dared not do so in person for fear of reprisals.[336] From the 1480s some Bristol merchants settled in Andalucían ports. Among the Bristolians in Seville were Peter Albordin, Thomas Malliard and Robert Thorne. Thomas Howell, another member of this circle, probably also had Bristol origins. Particularly important as a base for foreign merchants in Andalucía was Sanlúcar de Barrameda, whose lords, the dukes of Medina Sidonia, offered attractive trading privileges. Some of these Bristol merchants were very well integrated into the economy and society of their adopted homes, and had Spanish wives or mistresses, by whom they had children who were baptized locally. Malliard and Thorne were actively engaged in Seville's trade with the colonies in the New World, both shared leases with Spanish and Italian businessmen of the Reales Almonas, the royal soap factory, at Triana, in the 1520s, and both owned slaves. The earliest documented 'English' slave-owner in Andalucía was from Bristol. He was the wealthy merchant William de la Fount, who is recorded as holding slaves in the mid-1480s. He was not of English birth, however, having been among those Gascon refugees from the fall of Bordeaux in 1453 who settled in Bristol.[337]

Looking for New Markets: Iceland, the Mediterranean and the New World

Around 500 years before Cabot and Columbus, Scandinavians sailing from Iceland via Greenland had established a settlement in North America. The settlement was short-lived, but memories of that enterprise were kept alive in Iceland, and these may have

---

[334] Bernard, *Navires et Gens de Mer*, vol. 2, 544-5, n. 83, 635, n. 214.

[335] *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, no. 49. For arrangements made in Gascon ports for the accommodation of foreign merchants, see Michel Bochaca, "Les 'gens de mer' dans les villes portuaires de la France atlantique à la fin du Moyen Âge: l'exemple de Bayonne, Bordeaux et Libourne », in *Gentes de mar*, ed. Telechea, Bochaca & Andrade, 45-62, at 59-61.

[336] *GRBB*, Text, Part III, 123-4.

[337] A. Moreno-Ollero, *Sanlúcar de Barrameda a fines de la edad media* (Cádiz: Diputación de Cádiz, n.d), 128-30; Varela: *Ingleses en España y Portugal*, 69-70, 160, 163-4, 169; Connell-Smith, *Forerunners of Drake*, 6-9, 18-9, 33, 67-72; Heather Dalton, "Negotiating Fortune: English Merchants in Early Sixteenth-Century Seville", in *Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World: People, Products, and Practices on the Move*, ed. A. Williams (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2009), 57-73; eadem, "'Into speyne to selle for slavys': English, Spanish and Genoese Merchant Networks and their Involvement with the 'Cost of Gwynea' Trade prior to 1550", in *Brokers Of Change: Atlantic Commerce And Cultures In Pre-Colonial Western Africa*, ed. Tobias Green and Jose Ligna Nafafé, (OUP, 2012), 91-124 (I am grateful to Evan Jones for this reference); B. Krauel, "Events Surrounding Thomas Malliard's Will: An English Merchant in Seville", in *Proceedings of the 2nd Conference of the Spanish Society for English Renaissance Studies*, ed. S. G. Fernández-Corugedo (Oviedo, 1992), 168; E. Otte, *Sevilla y sus mercaderes a fines de la Edad Media* (Sevilla: Fundación el Monte, 1996), 67-8, 158, 193, Apéndice III. For the lords of Medina Sidonia's commercial interests, see Juan Manuel Bello León, "¿Quiénes eran los mercaderes de Sevilla a finales de la Edad Media?", in *Gentes de mar*, ed. Telechea, Bochaca & Andrade, 249-74, at 257-8, and for the Sevillian context for the English community, ibid., 267-71 & anexos 1, 3 (where Thomas Malliard appears as "Tomás Mallar").

been known to fifteenth-century explorers.[338] By then, Iceland's days as an independent republic were long-past. Following its absorption into the Norwegian-Danish empire from the thirteenth century, and particularly the Treaty of Kalmar of 1397, Iceland had become an impoverished dependency of its greater Scandinavian neighbours, and by the fifteenth century its reliance on overseas trade for the essentials of life rendered it perilously vulnerable to the whims of the Danish kings; these established a staple for the Icelandic trade at Bergen, and tried to maintain a monopoly in the hands of Hanseatic merchants. Hanseatic interest in Iceland waned, however, and for much of the century the island was neglected.

Into this vacuum, from 1412/3, sailed increasing numbers of English fishermen and merchants, first mainly from Lynn and Hull, but then from Bristol, the merchants trading with Hafnarfjord and the Vestmannaeyjar in a wide variety of goods in return for plentiful Icelandic fish.[339] The Danes protested at this infringement of their monopoly, and from 1429 the English government embarked upon a policy of officially forbidding English voyages to Iceland, signing a treaty to this effect in 1444, while at the same time selling numerous licences to merchants who wished to do just that. Bristol benefited significantly from what might be called the golden age of Anglo-Icelandic trade. Between 1439 and 1484 40% of royal licences to trade with Iceland went to Bristol merchants, but by this latter date Bristol's Icelandic trade was in steep decline, and had all but disappeared by the end of the century, as the Hanseatics enforced their claimed monopoly more tightly, and English shipping was gradually squeezed out of the Icelandic routes.[340] The visitors were often involved in violent incidents with the Icelanders, but these appear mainly to have involved English fishermen; the behaviour of merchants seems less often to have given cause for complaint. The majority of Bristolians in Iceland would have been in this latter category, and while there were still outbreaks of violence in which they were involved, it is also possible to find examples of Bristol merchants who appear to have been on friendly terms with Icelanders.[341]

---

338 This paragraph is based on: Gunnar Karlsson, *Iceland's 1100 Years: The History of a Marginal Society* (London: Hurst & Co., 2000), 89-122. A useful discussion of North Atlantic trade in the 14th and 15th centuries, with particular reference to the decline of Iceland's Greenland trade, is Jón Th. Thór, "Why was Greenland 'lost'? Changes in North Atlantic Fisheries and Maritime Trade in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries"*, Scandinavian Economic History Review,* 48:1 (2000), 28-39. I am grateful to Evan Jones for this reference.

339 This paragraph is based on: E. M. Carus Wilson, "The Iceland Trade", in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Power & Postan, 155-82, and Björn Þorsteinsson, *Enska Öldin í Sögu Íslendinga* (Reykjavik, 1970), passim. For east-coast ports' Icelandic trade see Wendy Childs, "England's Iceland Trade in the Fifteenth Century: the Role of the Port of Hull", in *Northern Seas Yearbook, 1995,* ed. Poul Holm, Olaf Uwe Janzen & Jón Th. Thór (Esbjerg, Denmark: Fiskeri og sofartsmuseets, 1995), 11-31. The voyage between Bristol and Iceland, while not without its risks, was relatively straightforward, with ships using ports of the west coast of Ireland, particularly Galway, as stopping off points; the east coast of Iceland lies at approximately 15º N, a little to the west of due north from the Irish west coast.

340 Among Bristol's leading Iceland traders was William Canynges. In 1439 he was among a consortium of Bristol merchants granted a licence to trade with Iceland, given in recognition of the great debts owed to them by Icelanders, while in 1451 he was granted a five-year licence to trade with Iceland, again with the stated intention of helping him recoup his Icelandic debts, but also in recognition of his faithful service to the king, and following the granting of a similar licence, in recognition of the Icelandic debts owed to him, by the Danish king, Christian I: *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, nos. 83, 103; Kirsten A. Seaver, *The Frozen Echo: Greenland and the Exploration of North America, ca A.D. 1000-1500* (Stanford UP, 1996), 193. For Icelandic trading licences granted to him by Edward IV.

341 Kirsten A. Seaver, *The Last Vikings: The Epic Story of the Great Norse Voyagers* (London & New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010), 150-4. An example of the latter is John Godeman, for whom leading Icelanders were

While trading conditions with France eased somewhat from the 1460s, and the Spanish trade was prospering, alternatives to the once lucrative Gascon connection were still being sought. Iceland could not satisfy such ambitions, even if it had been an entirely open market. Four years after the loss of Gascony an attempt was made by Robert Sturmy to open up an entirely new market for Bristol merchants, in the Mediterranean.[342] As we have seen, Sturmy had already been trying to expand his operations in this direction, with his disastrous pilgrim voyage of 1446, and in the ten years that followed he traded with Italy through London and Southampton. In 1457 Sturmy set out from Bristol with three ships, bound for the Mediterranean. He had acquired the necessary royal licences for the voyage but, most significantly, he had also secured the financial backing of most of Bristol's overseas merchants, as well as John, Lord Stourton and, possibly, Richard, Duke of York. He needed such investors because this was to be a massive undertaking, as indicated by the terms of his licence, which allowed him to trade in goods worth up to £37,000.[343] Among those goods he actually acquired the most valuable in monetary terms were wine, jewels and luxury fabric, but most strategically significant were 152 tuns of alum, a mordant essential to the production of fine cloth. This was always an expensive commodity, but in 1453 a major source of alum was denied to Europeans when the Ottoman Turks seized the alum mines in Phokaia, on the coast of Asia Minor. Sturmy probably purchased his alum from Genoese based on the Aegean island of Chios, from where they maintained a monopoly over the European supply. With this one consignment Sturmy could have practically cornered the English market for alum for a whole year. Alas for Sturmy, this was not to be. In 1458, before he could leave the Mediterranean, his flotilla was attacked by Genoese, probably goaded into action by the prospect of this and subsequent English voyages smashing their lucrative monopoly. Only one ship escaped, and Sturmy was killed. Once the survivors had reached home, and presented their case, Genoese merchants in England were prosecuted and imprisoned, only to be released on payment of the enormous sum of £6000 in compensation. This was distributed among the injured parties by a commission made up, it seems, of the principle investors in the venture, including Lord Stourton, Philip Mede, mayor of Bristol, and William Canynges, the great Bristol merchant and shipping magnate.

Just as Sturmy's ill-fated endeavour may have been a reaction to the loss of Gascony, so Bristolians' voyages into the Atlantic may have been motivated, in part at least, by the apparent impossibility of expansion into the Mediterranean. In turning to the Atlantic in search of new economic opportunities, fifteenth-century Bristolians were not necessarily aiming to find a route to the riches of the Spice Islands, China and Japan.[344] This prospect became increasingly enticing with the circulation of the works of

---

prepared to testify when he was accused of violence against Hansards: David Beers Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America, 1481-1620* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974), 48.

[342] This paragraph is drawn from Robert Sturmy's *Commercial Expedition to the Mediterranean (1457/8)*, ed. Stuart Jenks, *BRS*, vol. 58 (2006), 1-48, which now supersedes Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade"', 226-7.

[343] I am grateful to Evan Jones for his help on this matter.

[344] This paragraph is based on: J. H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance: Discovery, Exploration and Settlement, 1450-1650* (1973 edn., London: Cardinal), 22-8, 35-55, 187-8; Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Before Columbus: Exploration and Colonisation from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1229-1492* (Houndmills & London: Macmillan, , 1987), 248-50. In addition, the work of Dr Evan Jones, of the University of Bristol, and the "Cabot Project" is producing important new insights into Bristol's role in early Atlantic exploration. What follows owes a very considerable debt to this work, both published in journal articles and generously made publicly available through the project website: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/history/research/cabot.html.

classical geographers Ptolemy, Strabo, and the early-fifteenth century cardinal, Pierre d'Ailly, which encouraged serious under-estimate of the distance between Europe's Atlantic seaboard and Asia, while the expanding Ottoman Empire severed traditional Mediterranean trade routes with the East; but there were other reasons for venturing westwards. Portugal demonstrated what could be gained. From 1420 the Portuguese acquired and settled a number of Atlantic island chains: Madeira, the Canaries, the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands. By mid-century most of these were yielding excellent financial returns as producers of wood, sugar, wine and wheat.

Bristol merchants, with their long-standing Portuguese links, would have been fully aware of this process of Atlantic exploration and exploitation.[345] At least some traded with Madeira and they probably had access to nautical charts that indicated the position of Portugal's Atlantic acquisitions. Worcestre appears to have made notes from the work of Italian cartographers, from which he was able to list Portuguese Atlantic islands, and it is quite likely that such charts were in the possession of Bristol seafarers.[346] In a note on the islands off the coast of Ireland Worcestre comments on, "Blasket Island near Dingle...and he who wishes to sail to the island of Brazil ought to pick up the course [there] (et qui voluerit velare ad jnsulam Brasyle debet accipere cursum)".[347] This latter island was the object of a great deal of effort on the part of Bristol mariners in the latter half of the century. "Brasil", or "Hy Brasil", was commonly depicted on maps and charts from at least 1325, usually lying approximately due west of Ireland's Dingle Peninsula and the Blasket Islands in County Kerry, just as Worcestre noted.[348] Hy Brasil was one of a number of mythical lands believed to lie beyond Ireland, and because of their links with Ireland, Iceland, and possibly, Wales, fifteenth-century Bristolians are more likely than most of their compatriots to have been familiar with these tales.[349] "Hy Brasil" appears to be of Gaelic derivation (Uí Breasail, perhaps, "the island of the clan of Breasal" or "the island of the blessed"), and the island was associated with the story of St Brendan's voyage to a mythical Atlantic island.[350] The legend of "Hy Brasil" may have been confused with shadowy memories of the Scandinavian discovery and settlement of parts of North America in the eleventh century – Helluland (Baffin Island), Markland (Labrador) and Vínland (an area south of the St Lawrence?) – in stories encountered either in Iceland or from Icelanders living in

---

[345] *The Cabot Voyages and Bristol Discovery under Henry VII*, ed. J. A. Williamson , Hakluyt Soc., 2nd ser., 120 (CUP, 1962), 14-16; Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 52-7; Annabel Peacock, "The Men of Bristol and the Atlantic Discovery Voyages of the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries" (University of Bristol MA thesis, 2007) (available on http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/Sources/2007peacock.pdf [accessed 25/05/12], 20; L. A. Vigneras, "The Cape Breton Landfall: 1494 or 1497; Note on a Letter from John Day", *Canadian Historical Review*, 38 (1957), 219–28, at 223.

[346] *William Worcestre: Itineraries*, ed. Harvey, 371-7; Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 57-8; David B. Quinn, "Columbus and the North: England, Iceland, and Ireland", *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 49:2 (1992), 278-97, at 288-91 for the "Paris Map", associated with Columbus, that shows Brasil in the mid-Atlantic.

[347] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 239.

[348] Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 59-60.

[349] In addition to the other authorities cited, the rest of this paragraph is based on: T. J. Westropp, "Brasil and the Legendary Islands of the North Atlantic: Their History and Fable. A Contribution to the 'Atlantis' Problem", *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 30 (Dublin, 1912–13), 223-60, at 229-32 (St Brendan), 233-6 (Vinland); 240-2 (Brasil).

[350] Williamson, *The Cabot Voyages*, 9. The hill next to St Augustine's Abbey, now known as Brandon Hill, was also known in the fifteenth century as St Brendan's Hill; it was surmounted by a hermitage and a cross, and it is perhaps fitting that its summit is now occupied by the Cabot Tower, erected in 1897 to commemorate another Atlantic explorer: Worcestre, *Topographies*, nos 54, 322-3, 325, 403.

Bristol.[351] Some Bristolians may also have been aware of a Welsh tradition concerning Madoc ab Owain Gwynedd, who is supposed to have sailed across the Atlantic in 1170: while this tale in its fully-developed version, in which Madoc founds a settlement in America, has only been found from the sixteenth century onwards, allusions to Madoc made by the fifteenth-century poet Maredudd ap Rhys may reflect an earlier tradition that he ventured across the Atlantic.[352]

Bristolians had been searching for this Brasil from at least 1480. In the summer of that year John Jay, William Worcestre's kinsman by marriage, accompanied by another, unknown individual, attempted to sail to the island.[353] Worcestre had this to say of the venture:

> 1480. On the 15th day of July, the ship of [blank] and John Jay the younger, of the weight of 80 tons, began a voyage from Kingroad at the port of Bristol, to the island of Brazil to the west of Ireland, sailing over the sea by [blank] And [blank] Lloyd was the ship's master, the most knowledgeable mariner in all England. And news came to Bristol on Monday the 18th of September that the said ship had sailed the sea for about 9 months [recte weeks?], not finding the island, but was driven back by storms at sea to the port of [blank] Ireland, for refitting the ship and [reorganising] the crew.[354]

Worcestre does not write as though this voyage was prompted by nothing more than legends and an ink blot on a nautical chart. That Bristol sailors did indeed discover "Brasil" is asserted by a Basque chronicle, written at some time before 1476. In Book Eleven of the Libro de las bienandanzas e fortunas, its author, Lope García de Salazar (d. 1476), recounts the story of King Arthur's final battle, and tells how his body was taken, not to Avalon, but to Brasil. Salazar adds:

> And the English say that that island can be found if the ship can see the island before the island the ship, for a vessel from Bristol found it one dawn and, not knowing that it was it, took on there much wood for firewood, which was all of brazil, took it to their owner and, recognizing it, he became very rich. He and others went in search of it and they could not find it. And sometimes ships saw it but due to a storm could not reach it. And it is round and small and flat.[355]

Nor was John Jay's the last Bristol expedition to try to find Brasil. The year after his voyage, in July 1481, the Trinity and the George set out from Bristol, "to serch & fynde a certain Isle called the Isle of Brasile"; Thomas Croft, the customs collector, owned one-eighth of each vessel, and he was probably associated as sponsor of this

---

[351] Seaver, *Frozen Echo*, 14-16, 23-8; G. J. Marcus, *The Conquest of the North Atlantic* (2007 edn., Woodbridge: Boydell), 71-8; Karlsson, *Iceland's 1100 Years*, 28-32. The texts of the sagas particularly concerning the Norse settlement in America, *Grænlendinga saga and Eiríks saga rauða*, are extant in their earliest form as 14th and 15th-century MSS, indicating that the story was still current in later-medieval Iceland: Matti Kaups, Douglas R. Macmanis, Brian Birch and John C. Hudson, "Some Observations of Vinland", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 60:3 (1970), 603-9, at 605.

[352] J. E. Lloyd, "Madog ab Owain Gwynedd (supp. fl. 1170)", rev. J. Gwynfor Jones, ODNB [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17763, accessed 11/10/12].

[353] For possible Bristol Atlantic expeditions before Cabot, see D. B. Quinn, "The Argument for the English Discovery of America between 1480 and 1494", *Geographical Journal*, 127 (1961), 277-85.

[354] Worcestre, Topography, no. 418; Carus-Wilson, 'Overseas Trade', 245. A. Davies, "Prince Madoc and the Discovery of America in 1477", *Geographical Journal*, 150: 3 (1984), 363–72, offers an imaginative scenario regarding Jay and Lloyd's voyage.

[355] Harvey L. Sharrer, "The Passing of King Arthur to the Island of Brasil in a Fifteenth-Century Spanish Version of the Post-Vulgate *Roman du Graal* ", *Romania* , 92 (1971), 65-74, cited and discussed (along with translation of relevant portion of text) on the Cabot Project website: http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/Sources/1476brasil.htm [accessed 15/10/12].

voyage with three other Bristol merchants, William Spenser, Robert Strange and William de la Fount. Their success, or otherwise, is not recorded.[356] According to the Spanish envoy to London, Pedro de Ayala, writing to Ferdinand and Isabella in July 1498, after Cabot's voyage to Newfoundland: "For the last seven years the people of Bristol have equipped two, three, four caravels to go in search of the island of Brazil and the Seven Cities …"[357] Ayala's comment suggests that from 1490/1 Bristol had been engaged in a concerted effort to find this island, here coupled with another mythical island, about which there was much speculation in Iberia. Finally, in a letter to Columbus written in Spanish in December 1497 or January 1498, Hugh Say, a London mercer and, under his alias of John Day, a Bristol merchant, then living in Seville, stated that, "it is considered certain that the cape of the said land [i.e. North America] was found and discovered in the past by the men from Bristol who found 'Brasil' as your lordship well knows. It was called the Island of Brasil, and it is assumed and believed to be the mainland that the men from Bristol found".[358] According to most of the authorities consulted by Dr Vigneras, who discovered, translated and edited the letter, the phrase en otros tiempos, translated by him simply as "in the past", usually implies a considerable passage of time, at least a generation, or about 25 years.[359] If such a meaning applied in this instance, then the Bristol discovery would have occurred no later than the early 1470s. If so, to pile conjecture upon conjecture, Columbus could have learnt about this on a 1477 visit to Bristol that he may have made *en route* to Iceland.[360]

Since there is nothing but sea between Ireland and America at the latitude assumed by Worcestre and others to be where Brasil lay, the crew of a Bristol ship searching for the mythical island could have pre-empted the supposed achievement of Cabot and his crew in being the first Europeans to have reached the American mainland since the days of the Scandinavian settlements. Worcestre's testimony certainly seems to indicate that Jay and subsequent voyagers to Brasil would have struck out due west from the Braskets, and so been faced by nearly 2,000 miles of open sea before reaching America. However, the original discovery, if such there was, is more likely to have involved a Bristol ship on the Iceland run, or possibly trading with Greenland, which was blown westwards, and thereby came upon North America. Of course, Greenland is the next landmass west of Iceland, but this had already been settled from Iceland, and was probably known to Bristolians as well, and, in any case, is hardly likely to have been mistaken for a fertile land of great economic potential.[361] Assuming that such an accidental discovery had been made sometime around the mid-century, then this may

[356] W. E. C. Harrison, "An Early Voyage of Discovery", *Mariner's Mirror*, 16:2 (1930), 198-9; Quinn, "Argument for the English Discovery", 278-9. Croft, Spenser, Straunge and de la Fount may also have been the promoters of Jay's voyage in 1480: *Overseas Trade of Bristol*, ed. Carus-Wilson, no. 204.
[357] Quinn, "Argument for the English Discovery", 279.
[358] Vigneras, "The Cape Breton Landfall", 221-8; Alwyn A. Ruddock, "John Day of Bristol and the English Voyages across the Atlantic before 1497", *Geographical Journal*, 132 (1966), 225–33; D. B. Quinn, "John Day and Columbus', *Geographical Journal*, 133 (1967), pp. 205-9; Evan Jones, "Alwyn Ruddock: 'John Cabot and the Discovery of America'", *Historical Research*, 81 (2008), 224-54, at 236-7; *Cabot Voyages and Bristol Discovery*, ed. Williamson, 19-32.
[359] Ruddock, "John Day of Bristol", 230; Vigneras, "Cape Breton Landfall", 224 & n. 36.
[360] Quinn, "The Argument for the English Discovery of America", 206; Westropp, "Brasil and the Legendary Islands of the North Atlantic", 248.
[361] For the possibility of Bristolians trading with Greenland, and being blown off course to America, see Seaver, *Frozen Echo*, 180-1.

have seemed a propitious time for westwards exploration, given that the failure of Sturmy's voyage had shown the Mediterranean to be inaccessible.

If the above testimony is to be believed, then Bristolians reached what we now know to be America by 1476, long before Columbus and Cabot. Accepting this claim begs the obvious questions of why, having already made the discovery, they carried on, ostensibly at least, trying to find Brasil, and went on to co-operate with Cabot in the 1490s. Quinn suggested that the real motivation behind the discovery of "Brasil" was to find fishing banks and that, having found them, the Bristol fishermen, wanting to keep these rich fishing grounds a secret, maintained an elaborate hoax whereby what they subsequently presented as voyages of discovery were in fact fishing expeditions. This is unconvincing. For one thing, while Bristolians were great traders in fish, they were not great fishermen, preferring the easier profits that could be made through trade.[362] Also, the attraction of the rich American fishing grounds as an alternative to the supposedly inaccessible Icelandic fishery, has been over-stated as a motive for the early Tudor voyages of exploration: the systematic exploitation of these new banks did not begin until the later sixteenth century, and Iceland continued to be a popular destination for English fishing boats throughout the period.[363] A more likely explanation is that, America having been discovered accidently, the crew returned with tales of this new-found land, but either they had only the vaguest notion of its location or that knowledge was forgotten. Subsequently, it was assumed that the land they found must have been Brasil, which, as everyone knew, lay due west of the Braskets. Such accidental discoveries were probably the precursors to the Portuguese settlements in the Atlantic islands.[364] This still does not explain why Bristolians should have expended so much time, money, effort and, for all we know, lives, on this quest. After all, these merchants were surely hard-headed businessmen, not romantic dreamers. Again, the answer is probably linked to the Portuguese. The promise of "Brasil" was that it could be another Madeira: a lucrative producer of raw materials under English, and more particularly, Bristol, control. In particular, as the Basque account reminds us, Brasil was thought to be a major producer of Brazil wood, which provided a valuable red dyestuff. With its crucially important textile trade, this is something that would have been of great interest to the town's merchants. There is no firm evidence that Bristolian ambitions for Brasil extended any further than this before 1497. We do not know if the vision of Columbus and Cabot, that sailing westwards would open the way to Asia, and all the fabled riches of the Orient, was shared by Bristolians before Cabot's arrival. If it was, then the spur to their Atlantic explorations would have been all the keener.

Zuan Chabotto, known to English speakers as John Cabot, may have consulted with members of the Bristol mercantile community in Seville before travelling to England in 1494/5, and by this time he was certainly thinking in terms of a westward approach to Asia.[365] On his arrival in England he made first for London. This was

---

[362] Again, I am grateful to Dr Jones for his advice here.

[363] Maryanne Kowaleski, "Fishing and Fisheries in the Middle Ages", in *England's Sea Fisheries: The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales since 1300*, ed. D. J. Starkey (London: Chatham Publishing, 2000), 19-28, at 26; Evan Jones, "England's Icelandic Fishery in the Early Modern Period", in ibid., 105-10, at 105-6.

[364] This is how Madeira is supposed to have been discovered: see above, n. 26.

[365] David B. Quinn, "Cabot, John (c.1451–1498)", *ODNB* [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/66135, accessed 03/10/12]. Cabot's father was Genoese, but he was a Venetian citizen. For Cabot's Spanish sojourn, see M. B. Gaibrois, "Juan Caboto en España", *Revistas de Indias*, 16 (1943), 607–27; Juan Gil, *Mitos y utopias del descubrimiento: I. Colón y su tiempo* (Madrid: Alianza Universidad, 1989), 77-81. The last is

obviously because he needed a licence from the king to give him and his associates monopoly rights over whatever was discovered, but he also sought backing, successfully, from London's Italian community, including the London branch of the great Bardi banking company.[366] His voyages from Bristol, while almost certainly supported to some degree from that town's mercantile and sea-faring communities, were clearly not purely Bristol ventures.[367] Perhaps comparison with the investors in Sturmy's voyage may be useful here, since, like Cabot's project, this was backed by a combination of local and national figures. One difference is that part of Cabot's funding came from an international network. By the terms of the royal patent that granted Cabot and his backers a monopoly of the commercial exploitation of any discoveries, had Cabot found what he was hoping for, a route to the fantastic riches of that East of which Marco Polo had written, then Bristol might have become the "Seville of the North", one of the greatest cities in Europe. This greatly enlarged ambition may be what was different, from the Bristol point of view, from previous attempts to find Brasil. What Cabot actually found, of course, was a grave disappointment: no gold, no cities, few people and nothing recognisable as civilisation.

Cabot made three voyages from Bristol.[368] The first, in 1496, had to turn back. The following year he made landfall in the New World with a single ship. Finally, in 1498, he set off again with five ships and, apparently, a delegation of Italian friars from the London community who intended to convert whatever natives they could find.[369] Probably this expedition sailed down the Atlantic seaboard of North America as far as the Caribbean, before returning to England in 1500. Cabot, it seems, did not disappear somewhere off the American coast, as used to be thought, but made it back to England before dying shortly afterwards. By now his family had been leasing a house in Bristol's St Nicholas Street, and his son, Sebastian, would continue his father's efforts. John Cabot's trans-Atlantic voyages seem to have been followed by two more between 1499 and 1502, this time led by Bristolians, the merchants William Weston, Hugh Elyot and Robert and William Thorne, and with more substantial backing from Henry VII. Weston had probably been one of Cabot's associates.[370] Over ventures followed in the first decade of the sixteenth century, including a joint Bristol-Azores "discovery" of Labrador, but thereafter this first phase of English Atlantic exploration came to an end.[371] While it

---

discussed on the Cabot Project website:
http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/Sources/1494cabotseville.htm [accessed 10/09/12].

[366]Francesco Guidi-Bruscoli, "John Cabot and his Italian Financiers", *Historical Research*, 85 (2012), 372-93.

[367] Jones, "The *Matthew* of Bristol and the Financiers of John Cabot's 1497 Voyage to North America", passim; this was written before new material, from Ruddock and Guidi-Bruscoli, came to light, but is still very useful in discussing likely Bristol involvement.

[368] This paragraph is based on: Jones, "The Matthew of Bristol and the Financiers of John Cabot's 1497 Voyage to North America", passim; Jones, "Alwyn Ruddock: 'John Cabot and the Discovery of America'", 224-54; Williamson, *The Cabot Voyages and Bristol Discovery,* 45-144; Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 93-130.

[369] Indeed, the Italian friars may have been major patrons: Jones, "Alwyn Ruddock: 'John Cabot and the Discovery of America'", 232-4.

[370] Peacock, "The Men of Bristol and the Atlantic Discovery Voyages of the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries", passim, for John Esterfeld senior and junior, William Weston, Hugh Elyot and Robert Thorne, all early-Tudor Bristolians associated with Atlantic exploration. Weston is thoroughly discussed by Evan Jones, "William Weston: Early Explorer of the New World", *Journal of British Studies*, forthcoming: I am grateful to Dr Jones for supplying me with a draft of his article before publication.

[371] Seaver, *Frozen Echo*, 287-306.

is clear that Cabot's initial discovery whetted the appetites of merchants and king alike, it did not in itself lay the foundations for a new wave of English imperialism.

Given that the Bristol voyages to the New World were a commercial failure, and that while they certainly did enjoy Bristol support its actual extent is unknown, it might be thought unsurprising if the "discovery" of the New World made little impact there. Such is the impression created by the Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar chronicle, which makes no mention of Cabot and his successors, whereas it does note the ill-fated Sturmy expedition. However, later annals, now lost, did note Cabot's discovery, and in doing so they may have been preserving part of Bristol's alternative chronicle tradition. Even putting aside the probability that Bristolians had been searching (perhaps successfully) for over seventeen years for the land discovered in 1497, the subsequent expeditions that sailed from Bristol over the following five years, evidently with significant local and national support, show that there was considerable enthusiasm in some parts of Bristol society for Atlantic exploration: clearly, some people's imaginations were fired by the prospect of making direct contact with Asia.

Aliens in Bristol

As a major Atlantic port Bristol attracted visitors from every part of its European commercial network. The great majority of these would have been transient: the foreign sailors and merchants who stayed only so long as it took to turn around their ships. By contrast, Bristol's permanent, or semi-permanent population of "aliens", that is, those born outside of the regions over which the king of England claimed sovereignty, was tiny, certainly when compared to the alien communities of such places as London or Southampton.[372] Nevertheless, in the opinion of Robert Londe, master at the Newgate school in the 1420s, the presence of visitors and immigrants gave a distinctive flavour to the town:

> To Brystow, the wyche ys an havyn towne, comyth moo strangerys than to Covyntre, the wych is no havyn towne, notwithstondyngthat both bethe lyche good.[373]

Before 1440 there are few systematic sources providing evidence for the size of Bristol's alien population. In 1435 the alliance between England and Burgundy ended and the following year Burgundian subjects living in England – mostly Flemings – were made to choose between expulsion or taking an oath of loyalty to Henry VI. Twenty-six Bristol

---

[372] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 166-71, 551-61 for discussion of aliens in England from 1422 to 1461, and see also his "The English Realm and Dominions and the King's Subjects in the Later Middle Ages", in *Aspects of Late Medieval Government and Society: Essays Presented to J. R. Lander*, ed. J. G. Rowe (Toronto UP, 1986), 83-105, reprinted in Ralph A. Griffiths, *King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Hambledon, 1991), 33-54, particularly 49-52. For the legal status of aliens in England, see: Keechang Kim, Aliens in Medieval Law: The Origins of Modern Citizenship (CUP, 2000), passim, and particularly 137-44, 148-51 for 14th and 15th-century concepts of allegiance and place of birth, rather than parentage, determining alien or native status; Alice Beardward, *Alien Merchants in England, 1350 to 1377: Their Legal and Economic Position* (Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy of America, 1931), particularly 29, 32, 178-80 for the limited presence of alien merchants in 14th-century Bristol, for which see also T. H. Lloyd, *Alien Merchants in England in the High Middle Ages* (New York: Harvester, 1982), 59-60, 64-5, 81-3. For Southampton, see *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton, 1270-1600*, ed. Alwyn A. Ruddock, Southampton Record Series (Southampton, 1951); for London, see *The Alien Communities of London in the Fifteenth Century: The Subsidy Rolls of 1440 and 1483-4*, ed. James L. Bolton (Stamford: Paul Watkins for the Richard III & Yorkist History Trust, 1998).

[373] Orme, *Education in the West of England*, 39. While this text comes from a grammar book in use at the school, it nonetheless probably reflects Londe's own views.

aliens are recorded as having taken the oath, all of whom came from the Netherlands or the North Rhine Valley: Zeeland, Holland, Utrecht, Brabant and Cleves.[374] In 1454/5 four aliens who bought licences to reside in Bristol came from this same area: Cleves, Holland, Brabant and Westfold.[375]

By this time aliens were subjected to another requirement, that of a special tax, the "alien subsidy".[376] The first of these was granted by parliament in 1440, and the subsidy amounted to a poll tax on aliens, who were divided between householders and non-householders: the latter mainly servants, with a few chaplains. In later subsidies higher rates had to be paid by aliens who were keeping brewing houses or who were Catalans. The first grant's definition of "alien" suffered from logical inconsistencies, since it not only included those born under the king of England's allegiance in France and the Channel isles, but also the Irish. The next grant, in 1442, exempted the Irish and Channel Islanders, but it would not be until the third grant, in 1449, that the king's subjects in Normandy, Gascony and Guienne were exempted: just in time for these areas to be forever lost to the English, over the course of the following three years. To compound the absurdity of the situation, successive grants, of 1453, 1483 and 1487, ignored this uncomfortable development and continued to exempt migrants from these areas of France. In addition, there seems to have been a high level of evasion, even by the standards of medieval taxation, and the surviving records tend to be fragmentary to varying degrees. Thus, the alien subsidies give a far from perfect picture, but they are the best source we have and, if used carefully, can yield interesting insights into the size and character of fifteenth-century England's alien communities.

The only Bristol alien subsidy returns to give the nationalities of those assessed in any systematic fashion are those made in 1455 and 1458 in response to the grants of 1449 and 1453, respectively.[377] The following table gives the combined results of these sets of returns:

Table II: NATIONALITIES GIVEN IN BRISTOL ALIEN SUBSIDY RETURNS, 1449 & 1453

	HOUSEHOLDER	NON-HOUSEHOLDER	TOTAL
Breton	1	2	3
Dutch	1	5	6
Flemish	7	4	11
French	0	1	1
Icelandic	0	16	16
Picard	1	3	4

[374] *CPR*, 1429-36, 545, 549-50, 553, 559-60, 565, 567, 576-7, 582-3, 587. For the background to this, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 171.
[375] *GRBB, Text, Part II*, 48.
[376] The following paragraph is based on: M. Jurkowski, C. L. Smith & D. Crook, *Lay Taxes in England and Wales, 1188-1688* (Kew: Public Record Office, 1998), xxxix-xli, 94-5; S. L. Thrupp, "A Survey of the Alien Population of England in 1440", *Speculum*, 32 (1957), 262-73; *Alien Communities*, ed. Bolton, 2-5.
[377] TNA E179/113/137, 157.

Zeelander	0	1	1
Total	10	32	42

Flemish and Dutch together constitute the largest group within these returns. Since there was very little direct trade between Bristol and Flanders, migrants from this region had probably arrived from London or an east-coast port. This would have been an example of 'step' or 'chain' migration, or movement away from the port of entry towards another destination in several stages. Theirs was also 'betterment migration', probably prompted by a combination of disorder at home, and greater opportunities in England.[378]Around eighty per cent of the Flemish/Dutch aliens in the returns to the 1449 and 1453 grants were householders, rather than servants and other employees, and the majority were probably skilled craftsmen.[379] The Flemings seem on average to have been more highly skilled than other migrants to fifteenth-century England (they had long enjoyed a reputation for being innovators in textiles and brewing), and this may be reflected in Bristol not only in the higher incidence of house-holding among the Flemish alien subsidy payers, but also in the occupations of 1436 oath-takers, among whom were two goldsmiths, a leatherworker, and a tailor.[380] This is also suggested by the returns to the 1449 and 1453 alien subsidies, which in some cases give either occupational descriptions or surnames that suggest an occupation: there are two beer-brewers, two tailors, a pinner, pointmaker (maker of laces for securing clothing), shearman, bellmaker, leatherworker, goldsmith, smith and, possibly, heardsman. Of 107 individuals given occupational descriptions in the 1441 alien subsidy returns, the largest group – 25 – were leatherworkers. There were two large households of Dutch leatherworkers in All Saints parish, one headed by Olffe Ducheman, with three alien leatherworker servants, the other by Garard Ducheman, who had four alien leatherworker servants. The next largest groups were 14 priests and 11 tailors.[381] Belin Nansmoen, a married clerk in minor orders who died in 1416/7, was, to judge by his name, not of English stock, and was probably Dutch or Scandinavian. His will shows him fully integrated into Bristol society. He had been the steward of Rewley Abbey, in Oxfordshire, in the 1390s, and his involvement in a conspiracy to implicate fellow Bristolians in a robbery in that county suggests another kind of integration.[382]

---

[378] For models of migration see Ian D. Whyte, *Migration and Society in Britain, 1550-1830* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000), 8-14; Tim Bowly, "The Land Divides, the Sea Unites: The Communities of Bristol and its Hinterland and their Relationships with Ireland and South Wales in the Long Fifteenth Century" (unpublished UWE Ph.D. thesis, 2013), Introduction.

[379] "Herman Ducheman", a Bristol cordwainer pardoned in 1418 for not appearing in court to answer for an alleged trespass committed against Maud Cordewayner, is an example of a "Dutch" craftsman resident in Bristol before the period of the alien subsidies: *CPR*, 1416-22, 155.

[380] *Alien Communities*, ed. Bolton, 28-33; *CPR*, 1429-36, 549-50, 565.

[381] TNA E179/113/103.

[382] Wadley, Wills, 96-7. For the 1392 conspiracy, against, inter alia, Gilbert Joce, a Bristol MP, see *HPHC*, 1386-1421, "Joce, Gilbert (d.1423), of Bristol": http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/joce-gilbert-1423 [accessed 15/10/12]; another prominent Bristolian, Robert Colville, was his will's overseer: ibid., "Colville, Robert (d.1427/8), of Bristol": http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/colville-robert-14278 [accessed 16/10/12]. By 1420 Nansmoen's widow and co-executor, Isabel had married Nicholas Bewar who, with his other executor, John Daweborn, was suing the master of St John the Baptist, Bristol, for debt: *CPR*, 1416-22, 288.

The near absence of French from the returns to the 1449 and 1453 grants reflects their exemption from the subsidy, and so tells us nothing about the actual size of Bristol's French community, but this is unlikely to have been substantial. As we have seen, most of the port's overseas commerce was undertaken by its own merchants, so that we should not expect to find significant communities of alien merchants. Merchants from mainland Europe trading with Bristol sometimes employed their compatriots as resident factors, such as Nicholas Yraycoz, who in 1404 appeared as the Bristol factor of the Navarrese merchant John Disco, but they also used Bristolians in this capacity, such as Jordan Sprynge, working as the factor for a French merchant in 1458.[383] A rare example of a Frenchman in Bristol before 1453 is provided by William de la Motte, alias Guylliam de la Motte of Bristol, late of Conket, Brittany, merchant, who was languishing in Bristol's gaol in 1442 for some unspecified offence.[384] A small number of refugees appeared in Bristol after the loss of France.[385] They included Moses Contereyn (who received letters of denization in 1461) and Bernard Bensyn; William Lombard (despite his name, probably Gascon rather than Italian) like these two a former merchant of Bordeaux, may also have come to Bristol as a refugee, unless he was identical with the William Lombard of St Mary-le-Port parish, assessed as an alien in 1441, and buried in St Nicholas's church in 1488.[386]

Another Gascon émigré in Bristol was the merchant William de la Fount. He had a particularly interesting and wide-ranging career. By 1473 he was living in a house on the Key as a tenant of John Shipward senior. Two years later he was among those Bristol merchants allowed to trade free of customs in the maiden voyage of a ship he had built at the king's behest, and intended, in part, for royal service. He was one of the backers of the 1481 expedition to find Brasil. In the 1480s and '90s he was trading with Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Iceland, and was joint-owner of the Christopher, possibly the ship built in 1475, which was employed on these voyages. By the mid-1480s he had taken up residence in Andalucía. In the early 1490s he was back in Bristol, from where he evidently went on pilgrimage to Rome (it would be comforting, but probably wrong, to imagine that this was done to expiate his guilt at his slaving activities in Andalucía): in preparation for the journey he made a will in 1492, describing himself as a merchant of Bristol, and had returned by April 1495, when he added a codicil. He was dead by May, when his will was proved before the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. There is little in this document to indicate his French origins, nor his sojourn in Andalucía: he leaves bequests to his curate, the parish priest of St Stephen's, in which parish the Key-side house he was occupying in 1473 was probably located, and for the souls of his former wife, Alice, his parents, brothers and sisters, and to his two sons and four daughters, all of whom are under age, and therefore presumably the children of his second marriage, to Elizabeth, whom he appoints as his executrix. The single possible indication of his continental connection is provided by one of his will's overseers, described as John Barryero: this was probably Janicot Barrero, witness to the wills of William Rowley in 1478 and Thomas Beell in 1493, active as a Bristol merchant from at least the 1480s

[383] *CCR*, 1402-5, 267; *CPR*, 1452-61, 440. For the legal benefits of employing a native or naturalised factor, see King, *Aliens in Medieval Law*, 41-5.
[384] *CPR*, 1441-46, 79.
[385] F. Michel, *Histoire du Commerce et de la Navigation á Bordeaux*, 2 vols (Bordeaux, 1867, 1870), vol ii, 363-4.
[386] Carus-Wilson, « Overseas Trade », 211; *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus Wilson, 111; Renouard, « Les relations de Bordeaux et de Bristol au Moyen Age », 110. For Contereyn, see above, n. 28, and for his letters of denization, *CPR*, 1461-67, 41. For Lombard, see TNA E179/113/103, and his will, in *GRBB*, *Text, Part I*, 238-9.

and, presumably, of Gascon or Iberian origin.[387] Neither did Bristol have a significant number of Spanish or Portuguese residents, although Mark William, mayor and MP for Bristol in the early fifteenth century, was also known as Spaynell, and may have been of Spanish origin. His apparent adoption of an English-sounding alias, however, reminds us of the possibility of there being other aliens who disappeared behind an adopted name.[388]

The most surprising aspect of the returns to the 1449 and 1453 alien subsidy is that the single largest national group is made up of Icelanders, all of whom were non-householders. They are only ever identified by their first names, without any occupational designation, strongly suggesting that they were servants. Thus, we have "Snorry Iseland", "Helgy Iseland", "Haraldus Iseland", and so on. The returns to the 1449 and 1453 grants tell us nothing else about them. However, a return of 1484 to the 1483 grant of subsidy is more forthcoming. This names two alien householders, Nicholas Stevyns, dyer, and John Yrkyn, butcher, before going on to list 49 alien non-householders, all described as servants. Only two of these are named, but in every case the master is named. Of those servants who are not named - 47 of them - the first ten are described as "Icelandic boy" (puerum sibi servientem de Islond), followed by 36 described as "Icelandic servant" (pro uno serviente eiusdem patrie), and one is not described but his master paid the standard rate of 2s. for a servant. The two named servants present a problem. Heading the list, in the "master" column, are William Yslond and John Yslond; against the first, in the "servant" column, is Thomas Devynshire, and against the second is David Osteler. This is almost certainly a scribal error, and William and John are the Icelandic servants of Thomas and David, and not the other way around. If so, then the fact that these are the only two servants given names nevertheless suggests that they were considered superior in some way to their anonymous compatriots. That so many Icelandic servants should appear in Bristol in the mid-1480s, at a time when the Icelandic trade was being choked off by the Hanse, is surprising. Perhaps the bulk of these Icelandic servants, that is those not described as "boys", had already been in Bristol for some time.[389]

How and why Bristol's Icelanders may have found themselves in the town can be explained by reference to events in Iceland. In 1425 the Danish governor, or hirðstóri, of Iceland, Hannes Pálsson, was kidnapped by English sailors and brought to England, where he wrote a long list of complaints against the English.[390] Among these was the

---

[387] Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 8, 52-3; *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, nos 192, 204, pp. 230, 258-9, 265 (de la Fount), 273, 275, 278 (Barrero); Wadley, *Wills*, 160-1, 170-1; TNA PROB 11/10/338; and see above, nn. 14, 51.

[388] "William (formerly Spaynell) alias William Markes, Mark [d.c. 1434], of Bristol" *HPHC*, 1386-1421 [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/william-mark-alias-william-markes-1434, accessed 16/10/12]. For three Iberian merchants operating through Bristol, but not necessarily permanent or semi-permanent residents there, see Quinn, England and the Discovery of America, 55, 57.

[389] TNA E179/270/54; Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 49-51. Quinn (ibid., 51) identified William Ysland with a naturalised Bristol merchant trading with Lisbon in 1492, but this was based on a mis-reading of the customs account (TNA E122/20/9) where the merchant's name appears. I thank Dr Tim Bowly for alerting me to this.

[390] *Annales Islandici posteriorum saeculorum: Annálar*, 1400-1800, Þriðja bindi (Reykjavík, 1933-38), i (Nýi annáll, 1393-1430), 24. The definitive account of Pálsson's experience is Björn Þorsteinsson, "Sendiferðir og hirðórn Hannesar Pálssonar og skýrsla hans 1425", *Skírnir*, 127 (1953), 136-64. See also Þorsteinsson, Enska öldin, 65-6, 71; Karlsson, *Iceland's 1100 Years*, 119; Marcus, Conquest of the North Atlantic, 145; Carus-Wilson, "Iceland Trade", 164-6. For other interpretations of this evidence, see Helgi Þorláksson, "Útflutningur Íslenskra barna til Englands á miðöldum", *Sagnir*, 4 (1983), 47-53.

claim that they had forcibly abducted many boys and children from Iceland, or had duped their foolish parents into selling them, and had taken them to England where they were employed as servants and led miserable lives, with the result that Iceland had in parts been depopulated. He also named those Englishmen responsible. The alleged perpetrators seem mainly to have come from Hull and other east-coast ports.[391] Support for his allegation comes from the Danish bishop of the Icelandic see of Skálholt, Jón Gerreksson, who four years later claimed to have prevented what amounted to an Icelandic slave-market in the East-Anglian port of King's Lynn.[392] Icelandic and Danish complaints about English trafficking in Icelandic youths continued into the early sixteenth century.[393]

This context may help to explain an otherwise mystifying claim made in a 1462 ordinance of the Bristol Weavers' Guild. The ordinance complains:

> That for asmuche that diuers and many of the Crafte and occupacion of Weuers daily receyven and put in occupacion of the seid Crafte Straungiers, Allions, and othour not born vnder the Kynges obeisaunce, and for ther singuler profit, provokyn and stere divers merchauntz and othour to bring in to this Towne of Bristowe peuple of divers Countrees not born vndir the kynges obeisaunce but rebellious, which been sold to theyme as hit were hethen people, and through the contynuance thereof in defaute of correccion hit hath caused that suche Straungiers and Allions beth gretely multeplied and increased within the Towne of Bristowe, and that the Kynges liege people born within this seid Towne and otheur parties of this his Realme bene Vagarauntz and vnoccupied, and may not haue ther labour for ther levyng …

Therefore, henceforth no weavers are to "set or put any suche Estraungier or Allion to wirche…".[394] To be a threat to native textile workers at a time of economic depression when labour was cheap and plentiful these alien labourers would have to have been employed in the industry at low or non-existent wages. Answering the question of who these people may have been is not straightforward. Taking the ordinance at its face value, we are looking for "peuple of divers Countrees not born vndir the Kynges obeisaunce but rebellious", but this clause presents problems, since it is hard to see how aliens born outside of the king's allegiance could also be rebels, unless they had been born in territory which only subsequently came under English lordship; needless to say, following England's loss of the Hundred Years' War in 1453, such a situation did not exist. It is almost equally improbable that these bonded labourers had been naturalised as subjects of the king of England, and had subsequently rebelled in some way. In the absence of such candidates, the easiest match to this formulation seems at first sight to be the Irish, since the epithet 'Irish rebel' was used fairly indiscriminately by the English and necessarily implies that those to whom it was applied were also English subjects, but this logical position was universally adopted neither in the realm as a whole nor in Bristol, and the Irish could at times be treated as aliens. The equation between 'alien' and 'rebel' would certainly seem to fit this clause, but no evidence of people trafficking between Bristol and Ireland has been found for this period.

---

391 *Diplomatarium Islandicum*, IV, no. 381, 324; Carus-Wilson, "Iceland Trade", 164-5.
392 *Diplomatarium Islandicum*, XVI, nos 88-9; Carus-Wilson, "Iceland Trade", 117; Þorsteinsson, *Enska öldin*, 101-2; Seaver, *Frozen Echo*, 179; Marcus, *Conquest of the North Atlantic*, 139-40.
393 *Diplomatarium Islandicum*, IV, no 558, 523-4, no 715, 670; Seaver, *Frozen Echo*, 179, 204; Karlsson, *Iceland's 1100 Years*, 126; Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 49-50; Þorláksson, *Enska öldin*, 49-51.
394 *LRBB*, II, 128.

On the other hand, fifteenth-century accusations that the English abducted other peoples for forced labour were not restricted to Icelanders. During the Hundred Years War there are indications that English soldiers captured French civilians for this purpose, and Adam of Usk, writing of the English campaign against Owain Glyn Dŵr in 1401, claimed that the English "carried away into England more than a thousand children of both sexes to be their servants".[395] However, Bristol had good relations with its Welsh population, and in 1462 such a trade in French or Welsh is barely credible.

Icelanders do not quite match the Weavers Ordinance's description, and we cannot entirely dismiss the possibility that the Weavers had the Irish at least partly in mind, but they do seem to be the best fit. The Weavers may even have been deliberately vague and evasive in their wording, perhaps seeking to obscure the scale of Bristol's connections with Iceland, since some of these consisted of unlicensed trading voyages and, in any case, slavery had been illegal in England since the eleventh century. None of the masters assessed in 1484 as employing Icelandic servants appear to have been heavily involved in the Iceland trade: there are some merchants among the masters, such as Richard ap Meyrick, Clement Wiltshire and William Spenser, but most seem to have been craftsmen. So, they could not have supplied their own Icelandic labour. The servants, at some point in the past, must have been brought to England by merchants trading with Iceland, and then sold on to their subsequent masters, just as the Weavers' ordinance alleged. That this sale amounted to a virtual slave market, of the type encountered by Bishop Gerreksson at King's Lynn, is perfectly likely. On the other hand, at least one Icelandic servant was sufficiently regarded by her mistress to be remembered in her will. Among the clauses in the 1486 will of Alice Wisby was, "Item lego Margerete Yseland vna togam de brown colour" and a silver spoon. Alice was the widow of Nicholas Wisby, butcher, who was among the masters listed in 1484 as employing Icelanders, but in this list his servant is recorded as an Icelandic boy, which raises the possibilities that the other servant mentioned in Alice's will, Lewis, was also Icelandic, and that other, female, Icelandic servants were omitted from the 1484 list.[396]

While the last Bristol returns to the alien subsidies date only to the 1480s, there is later evidence that can be used to suggest what the town's alien population was like at the end of our period. Aliens were assessed at double the rate in the 1524/5 subsidy returns, and so they can be readily identified. In 1524/5 they numbered around only a dozen, mostly from France, together with a Dutchman and an Italian, Francesco Borsa. Borsa was a figure of some substance in early-sixteenth century Bristol: he was assessed on £30 in goods and in the 1530s was a trustee of All Saints' Halleway Chantry and a churchwarden.[397]

Bristol's alien population was statistically insignificant, and it appears even more insignificant when compared to London's, which in 1483 may have accounted for about six per cent of its population, not counting Irish.[398] Even so, it naturally fell within the parliamentary strictures imposed on England's alien population as a whole. The administering of oaths to Burgundian subjects in 1436 and the alien subsidies are separate manifestations of the parliamentary classes' increasingly uneasy attitude

[395] Nicholas Wright, *Knights and Peasants: The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), 71-6 (with thanks to Professor Clifford Rogers for this reference); *The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377-1422*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 144/5.
[396] TNA PROB 11/7/316.
[397] Peter Fleming, 'Ethnic Minorities, 1500-1685', in Madge Dresser and Peter Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City, 1000-2001,* 41-2.
[398] *Alien Communities*, ed. Bolton, 8.

towards aliens, as England's position in France first shuddered, then collapsed between 1435 and 1453. The situation was compounded by the mid-century economic downturn: in such circumstances, alien labour provided an easy scapegoat.[399] Another element of national policy implemented in Bristol was that of "hosting" alien merchants, who were required to find accommodation with an approved native host, who would stand surety for their good behaviour. The system was first implemented nationally in the 1440s.[400]

In addition to implementing national policy, Bristol imposed further restrictions. In the 1460s it was proclaimed that ships "of Straungers" tying up at Kingroad before entering the harbour had to send a maximum of five representatives to the mayor to present their safe-conducts and wait until the ship was searched and a full list of the crew returned; they also had to send all their "Archury" (presumably, projectile weapons such as bows, crossbows, and guns) to the mayor for safe-keeping until they leave. Only then could the ship sail into port. Once docked, each man was assigned a host, and made to buy a "byllet" – a sort of licence to remain – which he had to carry with him at all times on pain of imprisonment; if French, they also had to "weere a Whyte Crosse Opyn Vppon thair Schuldres".[401] So attired, matelots would have been wise to avoid dark alleys at times of tension! Anti-alien discrimination extended to craftsmen as well. In 1450 Bristol tailors, goldsmiths and cordwainers, whether aliens or natives, were prohibited from taking on alien apprentices or journeymen, and any current alien apprentices and journeymen were ordered to leave forthwith. An ordinance of 1455 imposed a higher fee on any apprentice born outside of England and Wales seeking admittance to the freedom and in 1479 an ordinance of the guild of bowyers and fletchers restricted apprenticeships to those who were not Irish or aliens. In the same year the fullers placed restrictions on "foreyn" men coming into the craft.[402] This was another part of the context for the Weavers' ordinance against the employment of forced labour, since whatever genuine moral revulsion may have been felt at the practice (and there probably was some), in purely pragmatic terms this labour represented unfair competition to free textile workers.[403]

Bristol was unique among fifteenth-century English provincial towns in the range of its trading interests. Many Bristol merchants and sailors had direct personal experience of an area that reached from Andalucía in the south to Iceland in the north.[404] Some had gone further south, to Africa. A handful had travelled to the coast of Asia Minor at the eastern end of the Mediterranean: of these an even smaller number had returned. Rather more, though still a small number, sailed to America. Arguably, not even London could exceed the scope of Bristol's overseas contacts. Not only did fifteenth-century Bristolians traverse a space that encompassed most of what the English would then have regarded as the known world, but they also helped to expand that world. If certain assumptions about Bristol's role in Atlantic exploration are accepted, then it follows that Bristol's central place in a network of communications and

---

[399] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 169-71; 558-9.

[400] *The Views of the Hosts of Alien Merchants 1440-1444*, ed. Helen Bradley, London Record Society, 46 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012).

[401] *LRBB*, I, 246; *GRBB*, *Text, Part I*, 141, *Part II*, 62-3. The Bristol returns to the "view of hosts" do not survive.

[402] *LRBB*, I, 246; *GRBB*, *Text, Part I*, 128-9, 151, 153, 159

[403] For the mid-century economic slump and other craft ordinances designed to ameliorate its effects.

[404] For a voyage from the Algarve to Iceland, via Bristol, in 1479/80, see Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*, 52-3.

staging-posts from Andalucía to Ireland and on to Iceland made possible the voyages of Cabot, and may even have played their part in Columbus's 1492 expedition.

One striking aspect of Bristol's Atlantic world is the extent to which these far-flung regions were inter-connected and mutually supporting. Commodities from the Iberian Peninsula were traded in Iceland, woad from France was used to dye West-Country cloth, which was then exported to Gascony, Iberia and Iceland. Elements of this network can be seen in the personal circumstances of one family of Bristol merchants, the Rowleys. William, son of Thomas Rowley, had become a resident of Bordeaux by the time he made his will in November 1478 (indicating that by then relations between England and France were sufficiently amicable to allow a partial restoration of old trading practices and relationships). William left bequests in Aquitainian francs and among his witnesses were Janycot and Robert Barero, almost certainly Gascons. He appointed his father Thomas as executor. William was dead by January 1479, when his father made his will and committed the administration of his son's will to his wife (William's mother), Margaret, but it passed from her to William's uncle and namesake. The latter William died between the following November (when he made a nuncupative will) and May 1480. This William Rowley, brother of Thomas, was evidently unexpectedly taken ill in Damm, West Flanders, since he made his will in that town, in the house of Roger de Dam. He was not just passing through, however, since he wished to be buried in Damm, and made a number of bequests to religious houses there. Some of his bequests were made in Flemish and French currency. In addition, he not only left legacies to the vicar of St Ewen's in Bristol, but also to two places in Spain: "La Rentarya" and "Hurenheranso". Meanwhile Margaret, the widow of Thomas Rowley, shipped in a Spanish vessel carrying madder, tar, wainscot and hops, from Flanders to Bristol, where it arrived in February 1480.[405]

The extant sources have not permitted an exploration of the lives of ordinary sailors, but this transient population, only staying for as long as it took to unload and load their ships, must have had a considerable impact on the life of Bristol's harbourside. They would have provided a considerable boon to the local economies of ale-houses, taverns, inns, shops and brothels, and sporadic headaches to the authorities.[406] Even those Bristolians who never ventured out to sea would only have had to take a walk through the streets adjoining the waterside to see exotic faces and hear many different languages, among them Gascon, French, Breton, Portuguese, Castilian, and Basque, while more widely dispersed, in the workshops of craftsmen, could have been heard Dutch/Flemish and Icelandic, among others. In addition, it can be argued that every time they passed by the north porch of the church of St Mary Redcliffe, they would have been reminded of Bristol's Iberian connections.[407]

Fifteenth-century Bristol's outlook on the wider world, while at times perhaps heroic in its breadth and audacity, was also, more usually, tied to very mundane, very necessary practicalities of making a living. Among them, and indeed at the very centre of

---

[405] Wadley, *Wills*, 161-3; TNA PROB 11/6/479; *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 258. In June 1480 Joan, widow of William, brother of Thomas Rowley, gave surety before the mayor in the Guildhall for the custody of their sons, John, aged 16, and Thomas, aged 14: *GRBB, Text, Part II*, 159-60. Bristol's trade with Flanders was intermittent, and very small-scale: Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 191, and for other examples, *Overseas Trade*, ed. eadem, nos 120-1.

[406] This was certainly the case in 18th and 19th-century Bristol: Matt Neale, "Crime and Maritime Trade in Bristol, 1770-1800", in *A City Built upon the Water: Maritime Bristol, 1750-1900*, ed. Steve Poole (Bristol: Redcliffe/Regional History Centre, 2013), 76-93; Steve Poole, "'More like Savages than Men': Foreign Sailors and Knife Crime in Nineteenth-Century Bristol", in ibid., 155-74.

[407] See Appendix II.

many Bristolians' commercial interests, was the manufacture and trading of cloth. Cloth was the mainstay of Bristol's export trade with southern Europe, and was also shipped northwards, accompanied by the exotic commodities imported from the south. Cloth was what alien merchants were interested in. Icelanders were brought to labour in the textile workshops. Among the many commodities imported from Gascony and Iberia were those needed to supply the textile industry, among them dyestuffs (particularly woad) and alum, an essential mordant. Sturmy sailed east in a vain attempt to secure the alum supply, and it was probably the prospect of abundant supplies of a dye that motivated the search westwards, for Brasil. While the sea-spanning exploits of merchant princes and master navigators might catch our imaginations, there were greater depths to Bristol's economic life. Less glamorous, but no less essential, were the contacts closer to home, those with Ireland, Wales, and the rest of England.

Chapter Five: Britain and Ireland

Overview

To get a sense of the intensity and nature of Bristolians' contacts with Ireland, Wales, and the rest of England we need to resort to a range of sources. Customs accounts can help with regard to commercial links with Ireland, but these do not exist for Wales, or for internal trade within England. Unlike some other towns and cities, such as Exeter, the records of Bristol's local courts have almost entirely vanished; unlike Southampton, we do not have records of traders and their merchandise passing through Bristol's gates; nor do we have registers of freemen, which have allowed historians a glimpse into the demography of such places as Canterbury and York; and, needless to say, Bristol's equivalent of the panoply of civic records of which London can boast is but a pale shadow by comparison. Therefore, reconstructing Bristol's domestic commercial networks demands resort to less direct indicators of economic activity, and, of course, beyond economic activity, there were a host of other links: social, political and administrative. The last two will be addressed more fully in Chapter Seven. Here, we shall concentrate on the economic and social.

One category of document that gives something like an overview of an individual's interests, albeit still within certain closely defined boundaries, is the will, usually made at the very end of life. Medieval wills can contain a vast amount of information on a variety of subjects, and offer rich data for the analysis of the religious, social, cultural and economic lives and attitudes of testators. Inevitably, however, they provide only a snap shot, and one that can easily mislead if it is assumed to be the complete picture of an individual's arrangements and social networks.[408] Even so, wills can used to reconstruct networks of personal associations and property ownership, as is attempted here, with the analysis of around 330 wills of Bristol testators proved between 1400 and 1500, drawn largely from the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Bristol's Great Orphan Book.[409] This is a mere fraction of the total number of wills that must have been made in Bristol over this period: even though wills were not made by those under age or without property, and men figure disproportionately as testators (married women with living husbands are rare among testators), given Bristol's population of around 10,000, and a period that would have encompassed three to four generations, many more wills must have been lost to posterity. Thus, we have to work with a sample whose size, while certainly small, is unknowable relative to the total number of Bristol wills made in this period.

In analysing these wills as evidence for the links between testators and the world beyond Bristol four broad categories have been employed: property holding; religious bequests; personal links, and burials. The first category includes all property in the form

[408] There is now a vast literature on medieval English wills. A useful recent introduction, although focused on the early-modern period, is Nigel Goose and Nesta Evans, "Wills as an Historical Source", in *Till Death do us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, ed. Tom Arkell, Goose and Evans (Oxford: Leopard's Head, 2000), 38-71. Bristol wills are discussed in Burgess, *Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints', Part 3*, 1-8.

[409] PCC wills are to be found as copies in the registers of wills at TNA, PROB 11, and the wills from the Great Orphan Book are in BRO JOr/1/1, and abstracted in Wadley, *Wills*. A few other fifteenth-century Bristol wills are edited by Burgess in *Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints', Part 3*, 11-33, and in *GRBB*, passim. The c. 330 wills used here represent every will written by a testator describing or otherwise indicating themselves as of Bristol, proved between 1400 and 1500 that could be found.

of land, buildings or rents mentioned by the testator as being held by him or her outside Bristol; all bequests to churches and religious houses beyond Bristol have been noted, as have bequests to individuals living outside the town and, finally, notice has been taken of those very few instances where a testator has requested burial outside Bristol. This data may tell us something about migration into Bristol. The property in the first category could have come to the testator through inheritance or purchase; in the former case, this may be evidence for the family's place of origin, but, of course, it could equally have come to the testator through purchase in an earlier generation. The second category may also suggest the testator's place of origin, if he or she made a bequest to the church where they were baptised, for example, but very few wills are specific on this point, or it may, in some instances, suggest the place of origin of a testator's spouse; again, however, associations with more or less distant churches and religious houses may have been generated by other factors, such as business links. Personal links could have been generated by a similar range of different activities, from marriage or apprenticeship, to business. The rare desire to be buried away from Bristol, where the testator has a free choice in the matter, is very likely to have been motivated by a long-standing family connection. For whatever reason these various connections originated, they all indicate the breadth and scope of propertied Bristolians' interests and attachments beyond their home town, and so provide a valuable initial over view.

The following table summarises the relevant data contained in these 330 wills. The period is firstly surveyed as a whole, providing data that are statistically more robust, and is then divided into two, in order to identify possible diachronic trends. The geographical extent of these contacts is categorised by county, country, or, in the case of London, by city.

TABLE III: WILLS REFERRING TO LOCATIONS OUTSIDE BRISTOL, 1400-1500

County/Country	Property: no. of recorded instances of testators holding property outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Religious Bequests: no. of recorded instances of testators making bequests to churches and religious houses outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Individuals: no. of recorded instances of testators making bequests to individuals identified as living outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Burials: no. of recorded instances of testators requesting burial outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Total & (overall ranking)
Somerset	17 (1)	14 (1)	10 (3)	7 (1)	48 (1)
Gloucestershire	15 (2)	10 (3)	7 (4)	2 (2)	34 (2)
Wales	6 (3)	12 (2)	12 (2)	0	30 (3)
London	1 (6=)	3 (7)	15 (1)	0	19 (4)

Ireland	3 (4)	4 (4=)	2 (5=)	0	9 (5=)
Wiltshire	2 (5)	4 (4=)	2 (5=)	1 (3)	9 (5=)
Shropshire	0	4 (4=)	2 (5=)	0	6 (7)
Warwickshire	1 (6=)	2 (8=)	1 (9=)	0	4 (8)
Dorset	1 (6=)	2 (8=)	0	0	3 (9=)
Staffordshire	0	2 (8=)	1 (9=)	0	3 (9=)
Devon	0	2 (8=)	0	0	2 (11=)
Herefordshire	1 (6=)	1 (12=)	0	0	2 (11=)
Leicestershire	1 (6=)	1 (12=)	0	0	2 (11=)
Oxfordshire	0	0	2 (5=)	0	2 (11=)
Berkshire	0	1 (12=)	0	0	1 (15=)
Cornwall	0	1 (12=)	0	0	1 (15=)
Hampshire	0	1 (12=)	0	0	1 (15=)
Lincolnshire	0	0	1 (9=)	0	1 (15=)
Worcestershire	0	1 (12=)	0	0	1 (15=)
Yorkshire	0	1 (12=)	0	0	1 (15=)
Total	48	66	55	10	179

Clearly, and unsurprisingly, most contact was made with those counties adjoining Bristol: Somerset and Gloucestershire. Most of the contacts occurred in south Gloucestershire and north Somerset. The strong showing of Wales is attributed almost entirely to links with the south and east of the country. The importance of Ireland, accounting for as many contacts as Wiltshire, is noteworthy. Below this group contacts dwindle to tiny numbers, but the counties around the upper reaches of the Severn - Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire - together generate nine contacts, which, while still few, may reflect the importance of the river in opening up the West Midlands to Bristol trade: this number would be increased significantly if Gloucestershire were to be included in this "Severn Valley" group.[410] The table suggests that there was relatively

[410] The Severn was navigable to Shrewsbury, while its tributary, the Warwickshire Avon, could be used as far as Evesham, in south-east Worcestershire: Evan Jones, "River Navigation in Medieval England", *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26:1 (2000), 60-82, at 69-70.

little contact with England's South-West Peninsula: Devon and Cornwall together figure only three times. Perhaps Exeter's hinterland, stretching into south Somerset, effectively precluded much Bristol interaction with this region.[411] Nor do the figures for Oxfordshire suggest that the Cotswolds was of much interest to these testators, although, again, if Gloucestershire were included we would see a rather different picture.

London is the most interesting case, however. The city ranks fourth in this table, but most of its prominence results from bequests to individuals. Bristolians, for the most part, do not seem to have held property there, nor to have patronised its religious institutions. This might be taken as evidence for the importance of London as a place in which to do business, and to indicate that a significant number of Bristolians migrated there, seeking their fortunes, like Richard Whittington – known to Pantomime as Dick - from the Forest of Dean.[412] Some Bristol testators doubtless remembered kinsfolk who had followed the same path, but these data cannot indicate how many. The table suggests that this movement towards London was not matched in the other direction, and hence there was little London property held by Bristolians, since very few had London ancestors from whom they could have inherited, and few bequests to London religious institutions, since very few had been baptised there, or had conceived similar emotional links through familiarity with London churches in their youth.

In broad terms the distribution of property and religious bequests – both, in some cases indicating migration, although to an unquantifiable degree – fits the pattern established by Simon Penn's discussion of migration to Bristol in the first half of the fourteenth century.[413] Penn's analysis was based on personal toponyms held by Bristol residents, and depended on the assumption that for the most part surnames only began to be inherited after the middle years of the century, so that before then they can be used to indicate the place of origin of their bearer. Obviously such a methodology cannot be employed with any confidence for the fifteenth century, but the patterns revealed by Penn may still have existed a century later. His evidence suggests that around one-third of migrants came from within twenty miles of the town, but that the rest could have travelled much further. In fact, early fourteenth-century Bristol appears to have been second only to London in the size of its potential catchment area. While a few personal names corresponded with places as far away as Norfolk and Yorkshire, there was a strong correlation with locations in the Severn and Wye valleys, an area with which a number of fifteenth-century Bristol testators were familiar, as well as the Cotswolds and central-southern Somerset which, as we have seen, were less well represented in the wills.

So far the discussion of the will evidence has treated the fifteenth century as a whole, but important trends become apparent if it is divided into two halves. In the following two tables the data are divided between two sub-periods, 1400-1449 and 1450-1500:

---

411 Maryanne Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (CUP, 1995), 279-324, demonstrates that Exeter's commercial hinterland in the later 14th century covered much of Devon and south Somerset.

412 Anne F. Sutton, "Whittington, Richard (c.1350–1423)", *ODNB* [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29330, accessed 13/11/12]

413 This paragraph is based on Simon Penn, "The Origins of Bristol Migrants in the Early Fourteenth Century: The Surname Evidence', TBGAS, 101 (1983), 123-30. For the usefulness of surname evidence for migration until the mid-14th century, see Peter McClure, "Patterns of Migration in the Late Middle Ages: The Evidence of English Place-Name Surnames", *EcHR*, 2nd ser., 32 (1979), 167-82, at 168.

TABLE IV: WILLS REFERRING TO LOCATIONS OUTSIDE BRISTOL, 1400-1449					
County/Country	Property: no. of recorded instances of testators holding property outside Bristol& (ranking in this category)	Religious Bequests: no. of recorded instances of testators making bequests to churches and religious houses outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Individuals: no. of recorded instances of testators making bequests to individuals identified as living outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Burials: no. of recorded instances of testators requesting burial outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Total & (overall ranking)
Somerset	15 (1)	10 (1)	4 (2=)	5 (1)	34 (1)
Wales	4 (3)	6 (2)	7 (1)	0	17(2)
Gloucestershire	8 (2)	3 (3=)	2 (4)	2 (2)	15 (3)
Ireland	2 (4)	3 (3=)	1 (5=)	0	6 (4)
London	0	0	4 (2=)	0	4 (5)
Dorset	1 (5=)	2 (5=)	0	0	3 (6)
Wiltshire	1 (5=)	1 (7=)	0	0	2 (7=)
Devon	0	2 (5=)	0	0	2 (7=)
Herefordshire	1 (5=)	1 (7=)	0	0	2 (7=)
Warwickshire	0	1 (7=)	0	0	1 (10=)
Staffordshire	0	0	1 (5=)	0	1 (10=)
Shropshire	0	0	1 (5=)	0	1 (10=)
Leicestershire	0	1 (7=)	0	0	1 (10=)
Total	32	30	20	7	89

TABLE V: WILLS REFERRING TO LOCATIONS OUTSIDE BRISTOL, 1450-1500					
County/Country	Property: no. of recorded instances of testators holding property outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Religious Bequests: no. of recorded instances of testators making bequests to churches and religious houses outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Individuals: no. of recorded instances of testators making bequests to individuals identified as living outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Burials: no. of recorded instances of testators requesting burial outside Bristol & (ranking in this category)	Total & (overall ranking)
Gloucestershire	7 (1)	7 (1)	5 (3=)	0	19 (1)
London	1 (4=)	3 (5=)	11 (1)	0	15 (2)
Somerset	2 (2=)	4 (3=)	6 (2)	2 (1)	14 (3)
Wales	2 (2=)	6 (2)	5 (3=)	0	13 (4)
Wiltshire	1 (4=)	3 (5=)	2 (5=)	1 (2)	7 (5)
Shropshire	0	4 (3=)	1 (7=)	0	5 (6)
Warwickshire	1 (4=)	1 (8=)	1 (7=)	0	3 (7=)
Ireland	1 (4=)	1 (8=)	1 (7=)	0	3 (7=)
Staffordshire	0	2 (7)	0	0	2 (9=)
Oxfordshire	0	0	2 (5=)	0	2 (9=)
Worcestershire	0	1 (8=)	0	0	1 (11=)
Hampshire	0	1 (8=)	0	0	1 (11=)
Berkshire	0	1 (8=)	0	0	1 (11=)
Lincolnshire	0	0	1 (7=)	0	1 (11=)
Leicestershire	1 (4=)	0	0	0	1 (11=)

Cornwall	0	1 (8=)	0	0	1 (11=)
Yorkshire	0	1 (8=)	0	0	1 (11=)
Total	16	36	35	3	90

The most striking contrast between these two tables lies in the relative importance of London, which rose from fifth to second place, and the declining prominence of Ireland, dropping from fourth to seventh. In addition, while in the second half of the century Somerset remains in the top three, it no longer dominates in the way that it did before 1450. These trends will be returned to later in this chapter.

Many of the personal contacts made by Bristol testators would have been generated through trade. Some idea of Bristolians' business networks can be gained through the evidence of debts generated when credit agreements were not fulfilled and the creditor had recourse to the law. Three classes of legal records relating to claims for unpaid debts have been used to gauge the geographical spread of Bristolians' commercial networks. Each one represents only an unknowable, but undoubtedly tiny, fraction of the total number of debts pleaded before each court, and so it would be highly inadvisable to place very much weight on any individual data set; however, taken together they may reveal meaningful trends.

The first two of these are the products of the establishment of certain port towns as "staples", with their own staple courts for resolving local commercial disputes, supported by the provision of the certification of credit arrangements, and the consequent prosecution of debt, if necessary, before Chancery.[414] The origins of this system date back to the 1283 Statute of Acton Burnell, and the Statute of Merchants of 1285, further refined by a statute of 1353. Bristol was one of the staple ports, with its own Staple Court. Bristol's earliest dedicated Staple Court Book begins in 1509, but before then Staple Court business was recorded in its Tolzey books. The earliest of these covers the period 1489 to 1497.[415] The Tolzey Court cases themselves are not useful for the present enquiry, since, while very numerous, they do not record the place of residence of the parties, whereas the Staple Court proceedings do supply this information. The fifteenth-century Staple Court proceedings have been supplemented by the extant early sixteenth-century proceedings, dating to the period 1509 to 1513.[416] Only those individuals admitted as "burgesses of the staple" could plead before the court, but this privilege was clearly not restricted to Bristol merchants. The cases are tabulated below. Actions between Bristolians have been omitted. In some cases creditors and debtors are not individuals but groups, and in these instances they are treated as one entry provided they all came from the same place.

[414] For Staple jurisdiction, see *The Staple Court Books of Bristol*, ed. E. E. Rich, BRS, 5 (1934), 1-102; *Wiltshire Extents for Debts, Edward I-Elizabeth I*, ed. Angela Conyers,Wiltshire Record Society, 28 (1972), 'Introduction', 1-16; Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter*, 212-3, and 213-221 for their operation in Exeter.
[415] BRO 08154/1a, Action Book, Tolzey Court, 1489 – 1497.
[416] *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 103-171.

TABLE VI: BRISTOL STAPLE COURTCASES, 1489 – 1497 & 1509-1513					
Place of Origin of Defendant/Plaintiff	Defendant	Total 1489-97 & 1509-13 (%)	Plaintiff/Burgess of the Staple	Total 1489-97 & 1509-13 (%)	Total: Defendant & Plaintiff, 1489-97 & 1509-13 (%)
Bristol	23 (19)	42 (67.7)	12 (15)	27 (43.5)	69 (55.6)
Cheshire	1 (0)	1 (1.6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.8)
Gloucestershire	0 (5)	5 (8.0)	1 (2)	3 (4.8)	8 (6.4)
London	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (4)	6 (9.8)	6 (4.8)
Oxfordshire	1 (0)	1 (1.6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.8)
Shropshire	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1)	3 (4.8)	3 (2.4)
Somerset	1 (4)	5 (8.0)	10 (5)	15 (24.2)	20 (16.1)
Sussex	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	1 (1.6)	1 (0.8)
Westmorland	0 (2)	2 (3.2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1.6)
Wiltshire	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (4)	4 (6.4)	4 (3.2)
Wales	1 (3)	4 (6.4)	0 (1)	1 (1.6)	5 (4.0)
Ireland	1 (1)	2 (3.2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1.6)
France	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	1 (1.6)	1 (0.8)
Spain	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	1 (1.6)	1 (0.8)
Total	28 (34)	62 (99.7)	28 (34)	62 (99.9)	124 (99.7)

Over these periods, the court was used more often by outsiders to sue Bristolians for debt than vice versa. The largest number of non-Bristolian parties came from Somerset, Gloucestershire, London and Wales, but outsiders could come from as far afield as Spain and France. They all had to have been admitted as burgesses of the staple before they could plead, and there are numerous instances throughout the extant Tudor Staple Court records of would-be plaintiffs being admitted in order to use the court.[417] Admissions to the Staple are tabulated below:

[417] Staple Court Books, ed. Rich, 61-2. An example of this is provided by Sir Robert Poyntz of Iron Acton, just north of Bristol, who became a burgess of the Bristol Staple in order to prosecute Edmund Dykes, an esquire of Dursley, with whom he was in a property dispute; Sir Robert, allegedly, sued Wykes for debt

TABLE VII: ADMISSIONS TO THE BRISTOL STAPLE, 1489-1497 & 1509-1513	
County of Origin of Admittants	Number of Individuals Admitted (%)
Bristol	58 (56.9)
Devon	1 (1.0)
Somerset	18 (17.6)
London	5 (5.0)
Berkshire	1 (1.0)
Gloucestershire	8 (7.8)
Herefordshire	1 (1.0)
Oxfordshire	1 (1.0)
Rutland	1 (1.0)
Wiltshire	3 (2.9)
Worcestershire	1 (1.0)
Wales	3 (2.9)
Spain	1 (1.0)
Total	102 (100)

These data strengthen the impression that the Bristol Staple Court was used as much by outsiders as by Bristolians: nearly half of the admissions come from outsiders. After Bristol, most admissions came from the immediate hinterland of Somerset and Gloucestershire, but next came London. Admissions from Wiltshire equalled those from Wales, and the Severn valley/West Midlands region is poorly represented. In particular, the importance of Somerset is apparent from both cases and admissions. While we can draw few conclusions from so small a sample, the parties' and admittants' counties of origin are mainly clustered around the immediate hinterland, with an important London component. Other counties are much less well represented, although they tend to reflect the major communications routes radiating from Bristol: the Severn and Wye Valleys (Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, Wales) and the Thames Valley (Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, London), while Bristol's links with Ireland and Spain are also evidenced. The one exception to this pattern is Thomas Bradmer, a merchant of Rutland, admitted in 1494.[418] The "French" party is in fact William Walker, bailiff of the lordship of Lille, who was sued by Nicholas Abowen, a Bristol tailor, in May 1513, when the city was held by the English.[419] The single Spanish plaintiff provides a good example of the close link between admission and pleading. On

before the Staple Court and the latter was imprisoned without bail. Wykes brought the case to Chancery between 1486 and 1515: TNA C1/178/45-7.

[418]BRO 08154/1a, 361.

[419] *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 164.

17 July 1492 a man described as John Michael, a merchant of "Arranomendy" in Spain, was admitted to the Staple; the next day he appears, as John "Derenomendy", suing three Bristol merchants for possession of a ship, Le Seint Stephen de le Rendry.[420]

The second class of records of debt prosecutions derives from the use of Chancery as a central registry for credit agreements within the Staple system. These are the certificates of Statute Merchant and Statute Staple and the related extents for debts, associated with the process whereby a creditor sued an alleged debtor for a debt registered in Chancery.[421] In common with all debt prosecutions, these only relate to debts allegedly still outstanding at the expiration of the agreed re-payment period, and Pamela Nightingale has suggested, on the basis of London evidence, that they represent about one-fifth of the total number of debt recognisances registered in Chancery.[422] The following table presents the data from certificates and extents produced between 1400 and 1500 where only one party is from Bristol. Individual debts are counted, not cases, since the same debt was sometimes the subject of multiple actions (the same principle is applied throughout this analysis of debt cases). Only 79 individual debts have been found over this 101-year period, so any conclusions drawn from these figures must be extremely tentative, and only those relating to London and Somerset parties exist in sufficient numbers for any kind of detailed examination.

TABLE VIII: BRISTOL DEBTS, 1400-1500 [from TNA PRO C241 Certificates of Statute Merchant and Staple & TNA PRO C131 Extents for Debts]

County/Total	Period	Number of Debts Contracted (Bristol Debtors)	Average Sum Owed (£)	Number of Debts Contracted (Bristol Creditors)	Average Sum Owed (£)
London	1400-1425	4	20.4	1	20.0
	1426-1450	7	43.3	1	20.0
	1451-1475	2	23.3	0	0.0
	1476-1500	5	46.8	0	0.0
London Totals	1400-1500	18	36.9	2	20.0
Somerset	1400-1425	2	71.5	8	74.4

[420] BRO 08154/1a, 154, 157.

[421] These are found in TNA C241 (Certificates of Statute Merchant and Statute Staple) and C131 (Extents for Debts). The extents have been used as a supplementary source of evidence where the occasional case does not appear among the certificates.

[422] Pamela Nightingale, "Monetary Contraction and Mercantile Credit in Later Medieval England", *EcHR*, new ser., 43:4 (1990), 560-75, at 565-7; eadem, "Knights and Merchants: Trade, Politics and the Gentry in Late Medieval England", *Past and Present*, 169 (2000), 36-62, and at 38; Jenny I. Kermode, "Medieval Indebtedness: The Regions versus London", in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1992 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Nicholas Rogers (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1994), 72-88, at 74; eadem, *Medieval Merchants: York, Beverley and Hull in the Later Middle Ages* (CUP, 1998), 238-9.

	1426-1450	2	30.0	0	0.0	
	1451-1475	0	0.0	0	0.0	
	1476-1500	0	0.0	1	200.0	
Somerset Totals	1400-1500	4	50.7	9	88.3	
Cornwall	1400-1500	0	0.0	2	8.5	
Gloucestershire	1400-1500	0	0.0	2	30.2	
Surrey	1400-1500	0	0.0	2	59.9	
Wiltshire	1400-1500	1	40.0	1	12.6	
Yorkshire	1400-1500	2	18.0	0	00.0	
Dorset	1400-1500	0	0.0	1	7.0	
Devon	1400-1500	1	n/k	0	0.0	
Warwickshire	1400-1500	1	200.0	0	0.0	
Total	1400-1500	27	69.1	19	32.3	

The dominance of London and Somerset is clear: London had nearly a third more debts associated with it than the other eight counties combined, while Somerset had an equal number to the combined total for the eight other counties. While the percentage of London debts across the whole 101 years shows a broadly steady trend overall, Somerset shows a marked decline over the whole period, so that London's relative share of Bristol debts increases quite markedly. In London instances Londoners are overwhelmingly the creditors, appearing as such eighteen times compared to only twice appearing as debtors. The low showing of Gloucestershire and Wiltshire is notable, as is the absence of cases involving Welsh and Irish parties. The overall catchment area extends from Cornwall to Yorkshire and Surrey. Compared to the evidence from the Bristol Staple Court, there is less correlation between the parties' counties of origin and communication routes. Also, the average size of the debts contested is over twice that for the Staple Court, which was £13.79, probably reflecting the use of Chancery for the registration of more substantial debts, contracted between parties from different towns.

The third set of data is drawn from the plea rolls of the Court of Common Pleas. This court handled an increasing number of personal debt claims during the course of the fifteenth century.[423] The sample is drawn from debt cases involving at least one party from Bristol suing or being sued by one or more parties from elsewhere, and each case is identified as having been 'laid' in Bristol by a marginal note in the manuscript,

[423] The standard work on the subject is Margaret Hastings, *The Court of Common Pleas in Fifteenth-Century England: A Study of Legal Administration and Procedure* (Ithaca & London: Cornell UP, 1947).

indicating either that the debt had originated in Bristol or, more usually, that the plaintiff came from there. As such, pleas from Bristol creditors are likely to be disproportionately well represented, while other pleas involving Bristolians as debtors are seriously under-represented. However, given the size of the plea rolls, some form of sampling is necessary, and this has the advantage of being relatively straight forward, but these caveats must be borne in mind in the following discussion. Plaintiffs could bring pleas alleging debts of £2 or more.[424] The sample cases were found in eight plea rolls from a sixty-year period; since one plea roll was produced for each of the four legal terms every year, this is, once again, a very small sample (0.3%), but while not in itself able to bear much weight, taken with the other data it should help to produce a worthwhile picture.[425] The following table summarises the Common Pleas data:

TABLE IX: DEBTS FROM CP40 PLEAS LAID IN BRISTOL: COMBINED TOTALS FOR 1450 – 1510

County of Creditor (Plaintiff) & Ranking	County of Debtor (Defendant)	Number of Debts (% of total)	Average Value of debt (£)
1 Bristol	Somerset	23 (23.5)	10.4
2 Bristol	Gloucestershire	22 (22.4)	14.3
4 Bristol	Berkshire	6 (6.1)	7.9
5 = Bristol	London	5 (5.1)	7.7
3 Bristol	Wiltshire	9 (9.2)	10.1
5 = Bristol	Dorset	5 (5.1)	10.3
7 = Bristol	Oxfordshire	4 (4.0)	11.6
10 Bristol	Herefordshire	3 (3.0)	5.6
7 = Bristol	Shropshire	4 (4.0)	4.8
11 = Bristol	Warwickshire	2 (2.0)	7.8
14 = Bristol	Hampshire	1 (1.0)	2.3

[424] A similar exercise, but on a much larger scale, is summarised in Derek Keene, "Changes in London's Economic Hinterland as Indicated by Debt Cases in the Court of Common Pleas", in *Trade, Urban Hinterlands and Market Integration, c. 1300-1600*, ed. James Galloway (London: Centre for Metropollitan History, Institute of Historical Research, 2000), 59-81.

[425] The plea rolls are: TNA CP40/758 (Trinity Term, 1450); CP40/796 (Hilary Term, 1460); CP40/814 (Hilary Term, 1465); CP40/883 (Hilary Term, 1483); CP40/885A (Trinity Term, 1483); CP40/888 (Easter Term, 1484); CP40/911 (Hilary Term, 1490); CP40/971 (Hilary Term, 1505); CP40/990 (Hilary Term, 1510). These were chosen because they have been indexed for the University of Houston O'Quinn Law Center Project on the Anglo-American Legal Tradition: http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT.html.

14 =	Bristol	Holland/Essex	1 (1.0)	20.6
14 =	Bristol	Northamptonshire	1 (1.0)	3.3
14 =	Bristol	Suffolk	1 (1.0)	4
11 =	Bristol	Wales	2 (2.0)	4
14 =	Bristol	Yorkshire	1 (1.0)	9.5
7 =	London	Bristol	4 (4.0)	26.9
14 =	Cornwall	Bristol	1 (1.0)	20
14 =	Middlesex	Bristol	1 (1.0)	3.3
11 =	Wiltshire	Bristol	2 (2.0)	5
TOTAL			98 (99.4)	9.5

The average value of debts contested before Common Pleas in this sample (£9 10s) is considerably less than the equivalent figure for the Statute Merchant and Staple data (£32 6s 8d), and also below the figure for the Staple Court (£13.79), probably reflecting a greater diversity of socio-economic backgrounds among the Common Pleas parties, although here there are still several examples of individual debts of very high value. Over the sixty-year period from 1450 to 1510, the leading counties were clearly Somerset and Gloucestershire. Wiltshire was next, and then Berkshire in terms of the number of pleas brought by Bristolians, although if pleas in which Bristolians appear as either plaintiffs or defendants are combined, London emerges as the fourth most prominent county. The relative prominence of Wiltshire and Berkshire perhaps reflects the importance of the upper Thames Valley as a route from Bristol to London. Given that the sample is made up of cases laid in Bristol, and so includes mainly Bristol plaintiffs, London's relatively poor showing in this table is in fact further evidence for its importance as a net supplier of credit and other services, since in Bristol-London debt cases before Common Pleas the creditors/plaintiffs were overwhelmingly Londoners: in a sample of 21 debts involving Bristol and London parties, pleaded before Common Pleas from 1400 to 1500, and laid in London as well as Bristol, 19 involved London creditors/plaintiffs, as against only 2 from Bristol.[426] This imbalance accords with the evidence from the Staple evidence. Below Berkshire/London the incidence of cases is too low to bear any meaningful comparative analysis, other than to note how few they are relative to the top four, and how extensive were Bristol's trading links: while neither Irish nor Welsh appear as plaintiffs in Common Pleas, and Wales is represented by only two cases, and Ireland does not appear at all, within England, the range of Bristol's commercial networks stretches from Yorkshire and Essex to Cornwall. As with the Staple Court and Chancery evidence, this distribution encompasses the Severn and

[426] This sample was taken from *Court of Common Pleas: The National Archives, CP40: 1399-1500*, ed. Jonathan Mackman & Matthew Stephens (http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=119286, 2010), an on-line database of CP40 cases involving London parties [accessed 15/11/2012].

Thames Valleys. While Bristolians did travel through and trade with these areas, it is also very likely that some, at least, of the parties made the acquaintance of Bristolians in London, and contracted their debts there. This was probably the case with many of the more distant counties included in these tables.

The final set of data to be included in this discussion comes from the registration of apprentices. Apprentices were a major source of new blood to pre-modern towns, and relationships sealed with apprenticeships presumably depended on existing ties forged from commercial or family associations. The evidence provided by the registration of Bristol apprenticeship certificates, by which the apprentice's new master agreed terms with the apprentice's parents or guardians, would be invaluable for the study of migration to fifteenth-century Bristol. Unfortunately, the Bristol Apprentice Books which record this information are only extant from 1532. They are still worth considering however, since they may indicate trends that had been present more than thirty years earlier. On this assumption, the following table summarises data from the first decade represented in the Bristol Apprentice Books, from 1532 to 1542:[427]

Table X: BRISTOL APPRENTICES REGISTERED 1532-1542		
County/Region of Origin & Ranking	Number of Apprentices	Percentage
Bristol (1)	404	29.2
Cheshire (15)	13	0.9
Gloucestershire (2)	185	13.3
Hampshire (16=)	11	0.8
Herefordshire (12)	28	2.0
Lancashire (11)	30	2.2
Middlesex/London (14)	15	1.0
Shropshire (5)	75	5.4
Somerset (4)	147	10.6
Staffordshire (9)	41	3.0
Warwickshire (13)	18	1.3
Westmorland (16=)	11	0.8
Wiltshire (10)	35	2.5

[427] *The Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book 1532-1565: Part 1 1532-1542*, ed. D. Hollis, BRS, 14 (1949), Appendix B, 197, discussed in Ann Yarbrough, "The Geographical and Social Origin of Bristol Apprentices, 1542-1565", TBGAS, 98 (1980), 113-130.

Worcestershire (6)	72	5.2
Other English Counties* (7)	68	5.0
England Total	1153 (83.4%)	
Ireland (8)	55	4.0
Wales (3)	174	12.6
TOTAL	1382	99.8
*English counties supplying fewer than 10 apprentices		

The figures for 1532 to 1542 reinforce the impression already created by the testamentary and legal evidence of the importance of Bristol's connections with its immediate hinterland in Gloucestershire and Somerset. Also important was the Severn Valley and West Midlands, with this region supplying almost seventeen per cent of Bristol's apprentices. The appearance of Cheshire, Lancashire and Westmorland among the top fourteen English counties is unexpected, suggesting either significant overland routes from the North-West at least as far as the Severn or coastal traffic around Wales. Wales itself was the third largest source of apprentices, nearly two-thirds of whom came from the south-eastern counties of Monmouthshire (65, 37.3% of the Welsh total), Glamorgan (31, 17.8%) and Brecon (16, 9.1%), but with a sizeable contingent from Pembrokeshire (36, 20.7%). That one-fifth of Welsh apprentices should have come from the most westerly tip of South Wales is in part testimony to the strength of Bristol's coastal trade with this region, but may also be explained by South Pembrokeshire's heavily Anglicised character, while Carmarthen may have been a rival magnet for Welsh apprentices from the more purely Welsh-speaking areas of central and west South Wales.[428] The South-West Peninsula supplied few apprentices to Bristol, presumably because Exeter was the obvious destination for apprentices from Cornwall, Devon and south Somerset. The Irish constituted only around six per cent of apprentices.[429] Looking across all the data sets so far analysed, the South West figures less prominently than might be expected, given that Bristol did have a significant trade with Bristol Channel ports along the north coast of the peninsula: again, the explanation probably has much to do with Exeter, whose hinterland stretched across Devon and south Somerset.[430] The strength of the South Welsh apprentice contingent, when seen with the high incidence of fifteenth-century Bristol testators' interests in South Wales, does suggest the importance of this region to Bristol but, at least on the basis of the evidence discussed so far, the Welsh seem to have figured more prominently as migrants to Bristol than as business partners.[431] The significant number of Bristolians who held Welsh property

[428] Spencer Dimmock and Jinx Newly, "Apprentices", in Dresser & Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City*, 36.

[429] For discussion of Welsh and Irish apprentices in early 16th-century Bristol see Dresser & Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City*, 36-7.

[430] Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter*, 99, 169-70, and Figures 6.1 & 7.1.

[431] The much less prominent presence of Welsh parties to Bristol debt cases in Common Pleas can largely be attributed to the exclusion of Wales from the court's jurisdiction, but – admittedly on a very small sample – they do not appear to have been prominent at Bristol's Staple Court either.

were probably migrants or their descendants, but there is the possibility that some were investing in real estate across the Severn. London presents almost a mirror image of the Bristol-Wales links, in that few, if any, Londoners settled in Bristol, while a number of Bristolians moved to the metropolis, but many had trading and financial dealings with Bristolians and property interests in the town. Taken together, the testamentary, legal and apprenticeship evidence for the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries fits well with the early fourteenth-century pattern based on toponyms described by Penn: most contact was with the immediate hinterland, particularly Gloucestershire and north-central Somerset, with secondary areas of contact along the Severn-Wye valleys and the Thames Valley reaching to London.[432]

Regional Case Studies

Understanding how and why this network of Bristol's contacts looked as it did requires some appreciation of key developments in the domestic economies of later medieval England, Wales and Ireland. The most long-running debate in the study of later medieval towns since the 1970s has concerned the notion of urban decline.[433] While the debate is not entirely played out, a broad consensus has been reached, to the effect that the urban economies of England and Wales between the Black Death and the Reformation varied in their performance according to the fortunes of their regional hinterlands. Urban contraction was a general feature, in a period when population as a whole contracted severely and then stagnated, but some towns grew, relative to overall population, while others shrank, and urban economies tended to follow suit, although there is no easy correlation to be made between population size and per capita wealth, even allowing for very considerable variations in the fortunes of different sectors of urban populations and economies.[434] Two factors that played a crucial role in determining the fortunes of regional economies were the textile industry and the growth of London as the capital of an integrated, national economy across England and Wales.

By the middle of the fourteenth century English manufacturers were meeting most of the domestic demand for cloth.[435] During the course of the century cloth began to rival wool as England's major export commodity: around 1380 the number of woollen cloths exported exceeded the number of sacks of wool.[436] Between 1437 and 1447 the total value of exported cloths exceeded that of wool for the first time.[437] Before the fourteenth-century expansion of cloth production most of the textile industry was based in towns, but thereafter an increasing proportion of manufacturing was rural. A

[432] A pattern also found among the canons of St Augustine's Abbey between 1350 and 1539, to judge by those of their surnames that appear to have been toponymic: James G Clark, "St Augustine's in the Later Middle Ages", in *Medieval Art, Architecture and History of Bristol Cathedral*, ed. Jon Cannon and Beth Williamson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 247-62, at 250.
[433] Summarised in: Alan Dyer, *Decline and Growth in English Towns, 1400-1640* (Houndmills: Macmillan/Economic History Society, 1991), 12-13; Barrie Dobson, "General Survey, 1300-1540", in CUHB, 273-90, at 274-7; Jennifer Kermode, "The Greater Towns, 1300-1540", in ibid., 441-65, at 447-9; T. R. Slater and James P. P. Higgins, "What is Urban Decline: Desolation, Decay and Destruction, or an Opportunity?", in *Towns in Decline, AD 100-1600*, ed. Slater (Aldershot : Ashgate, 2000), 1-22, at 1-3.
[434] The crucial importance of regional variation is pithily expressed by Richard Britnell, "The Economy of British Towns, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 313-33, at 330-1.
[435] E. M. Carus-Wilson, "Trends in the Export of English Woollens in the Fourteenth Century", in her *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (2nd edn., London: Methuen, 1967), 239-64, at 242.
[436] E. M. Carus-Wilson and Olive Coleman, *England's Export Trade, 1275-1547* (OUP, 1963), 122-3, 138-9.
[437] J. L. Bolton, *The Medieval English Economy, 1150-1500* (London: Dent, 1980), 292-3.

major reason for this shift was technological. The thirteenth century saw the widespread adoption of the fulling mill. This was powered by water, and so first fulling – the breaking down of the fibres to felt and thicken the cloth – and then the weaving itself and other phases of the production process began to be relocated to sites next to fast-flowing rivers in the countryside. Towns found it increasingly difficult to compete in the production of cloth that required heavy fulling – not all cloth did - and for such products tended to be left with only later stages in the manufacturing process, such as shearing and dyeing, and with marketing the cloth that had been woven and fulled in their rural hinterlands.[438] The rural industry, meanwhile, emerged as an early model of capitalist production, run by entrepreneurs – the "clothiers" or "clothmen" – who bought the raw materials, put out the work to individual weavers and fullers, from whom they then collected the finished products, and then sold it on to cloth merchants. The cloth industry therefore witnessed two revolutions: one technological, in the form of the fulling mill and, to a much lesser extent, in the adoption of spinning wheels and the appearance of the gig mill, which raised the nap on cloth for shearing, and the other organisational, with the growth of capitalist means of production.[439]

Bristol lay between two of the most important areas of rural cloth production in fifteenth-century England: to the south and south-east the North Somerset/North-West Wiltshire region and the Cotswolds to the north –east. In the 1390s Somerset and Wiltshire were the two most productive textile counties in England, and throughout the fifteenth century the West Country as a whole (defined here as Hampshire, Wiltshire, Devon, Somerset, Bristol and Gloucestershire) produced around half of all England's cloth.[440] The growth of the industry can be illustrated by reference to two cloth villages and one agglomeration of hamlets in the Somerset/Wiltshire/Gloucestershire area: Pensford, Castle Combe and the settlements in Stroudwater. The first appeared in the fourteenth century and quickly became one of fifteenth-century Somerset's foremost markets for locally-produced cloth, rivaling Frome, the county's paramount cloth producer.[441] Castle Combe in Wiltshire was an industrial village in the fifteenth century, whose inhabitants included families who became wealthy through cloth production despite still being serfs. For fifty years from 1409 its lord was Sir John Fastolf, and Castle Combe provided the uniforms for his retinues in the Hundred Years' War. His steward at Castle Combe was none other than William Worcestre, who – characteristically – produced in 1454 a detailed survey of the place. Finally, in Gloucestershire, Stroudwater emerged in the second half of the century as a major centre for the fulling and dyeing of cloth.[442]

---

[438] E. M. Carus-Wilson, "An Industrial Revolution of the Thirteenth Century", in her *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, 183-210, and eadem, "The English Cloth Industry in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries", in ibid., 211-38.

[439] Christopher Dyer, *An Age of Transition? Economy and Society in England in the Later Middle Ages* (OUP, 2005), 167-8.

[440] A. R. Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking: An Economic Survey* (London: Heinemann, 1982), passim; E. M. Carus-Wilson, "The Woollen Industry before 1550", in *The Victoria History of the County of Wiltshire*, vol. 4, ed. Elizabeth Crittall, (OUP/Institute of Historical Research, London, 1959), 115-47; John Hare, "Pensford and the Growth of the Cloth Industry in Late Medieval Somerset", *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History*, 147 (2003), 173-80; idem, *A Prospering Society: Wiltshire in the Later Middle Ages* (Hatfield: Hertfordshire UP, 2011), 176-94; Derek Hurst, *Sheep in the Cotswolds: The Medieval Wool Trade* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), 106-9, 119-33.

[441] Hare, "Pensford", passim.

[442] E. M. Carus-Wilson, "Evidence of Industrial Growth on Some Fifteenth-Century Manors', *EcHR*, new ser. 12:2 (1959), 190-205; David Rollison, *The Local Origins of Modern Society: Gloucestershire, 1500-1800* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992), 25-7.

Textiles were the single biggest sector in Bristol's industrial economy, providing employment directly for carders, spinners, weavers, fullers (known in the West Country as "tuckers" or "towkers"), shearmen and dyers, as well as cloth merchants, and, indirectly, for sailors and carriers, among others.[443] However, Bristol's textile industry was not immune from competition and economic depressions. To judge by the figures for cloth exports, the beginning of the century saw the town's economy struggling, with exports reaching a fifteenth-century low point (2069 cloths) in the second decade, before recovering to an annual average figure of 5106 cloths for 1440-1450. There then followed twenty years of further depression, with exports hitting a low of 2163 cloths in the 1460s, before a recovery that in the 1490s saw a decennial figure for cloth exports of 6515 cloths, the highest in the whole of the century.[444] These data fit national trends, which show an early fifteenth-century reduction in cloth exports and a very serious slump in mid-century.[445] They are also matched by complaints from within Bristol itself. Complaints of poverty made by urban communities need to be treated with care, since they are usually preliminaries to requesting relief from taxation or similar pleas to be given privileged financial treatment, but in this case they do have the ring of truth. They are bunched around the 1460s and 1470s. In the 1460s the weavers tried to restrict employment in the industry to males, banning women from the looms, but this proved impractical. From the same decade comes a petition to the earl of Warwick requesting him to persuade the king to restrict the export of wool and reduce the town's upcoming tax contribution; the justification for this plea was that while in the past the production of woollen cloth had been the chief element of the town's economy, now, because so much wool was going abroad, its textile workers were reduced to idleness and penury.[446] Shearmen and fullers were also quite specific in their analysis of why their trades were suffering, in both cases blaming rural competition: the shearman tried to prohibit cloth from being sheared in Bedminster, Barton Hundred or anywhere else outside Bristol except, interestingly, London, while fullers complained of allegedly substandard work done by 'millmen' outside the town gates, and defective weaving and fulling in the countryside, and called for restrictions on strangers entering the craft.[447] By 1493 poor weavers and fullers were objects of charity: in that year the Bristol testator Thomas atte Hay left 40s for their relief.[448] Indeed, Bristol's own weaving industry was well on the path to extinction by then, but dyeing continued to be important to its economy. One of the ways in which this is evidenced is the ubiquity in Bristol records of woad, the most commonly used dyestuff: as well as being a major

[443] Sacks, Trade, *Society and Politics*, vol. I, 259-5. For an evocative description of Bristol's manufacturing and inland trade, see Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 183-91. Bruce Williams, *Excavations in the Medieval Suburb of Redcliffe, Bristol, 1980* (Bristol: City of Bristol Museum and Art gallery/Bristol Threatened History Society, 1981), 17-22 reports on a 14th-century dyeworks, possibly combined with a fulling workshop.
[444] Sacks, Trade, *Society and Politics*, vol. I, 261-3.
[445] John Hatcher, "The Great Slump of the Mid-Fifteenth Century", in *Progress and Problems in Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Edward Miller*, ed. R. H. Britnell and J. Hatcher (CUP, 1996), 236-72.
[446] *LRBB,* vol. 2, 127-8; *GRBB, Text, Part II*, 68-9, *Part III*, 77. Attempts to maintain employment by excluding outsiders were not restricted to weavers.
[447] *LRBB*, vol. 2, 79; *GRBB, Text, Part I*, 161. The amount of cloth produced in Bristol is impossible to quantify, since the surviving Bristol accounts of the aulnage tax on cloth for the fifteenth century are in large measure a bureaucratic fiction: E. M. Carus-Wilson, "The Aulnage Accounts: A Criticism", in her *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, 279-91.
[448] TNA PROB 11/1/281

import commodity, it was often bequeathed in wills and squabbled over in legal cases.[449] That some, at least, of this was used by Bristol dyers, rather than being sold on to rural clothiers, is shown by an ordinance of 1477/8, concerning the supply of woad to members of the Dyers' Guild.[450] The recovery in Bristol's cloth exports at the end of the fifteenth century need not suggest a concomitant recovery in its weaving industry, since the increased volume of cloth exports could well have been supplied by rural clothiers, even if some of this was finished in Bristol. Bristol probably lost about forty per cent of its population over the 147 years from the poll tax of 1377 to the subsidy of 1524, and this demographic decline was surely related to the problems it experienced in its textile industry.[451]

The interaction between Bristolians and clothiers and textile workers in the wider region is apparent from Bristol's Staple Court records. Eight textile workers or clothiers from Somerset were admitted to the court in the period 1489 to 1497, including the clothiers John Raglond and John Flowet from Pensford and John Roos from Frome. Raglond went on to sue a Bristol merchant for debt, and was among five Somerset clothiers or textile workers to bring cases in this period, including William Warde, clothier, of Pensford.[452] Among those admitted to the Staple in 1510 and 1511 were Richard Brasyer, a Bath weaver, and the Wiltshire clothiers Henry Mytton and John Britton. Brasyer then brought a Staple Court suit against a Bristol merchant, and Mytton went on to bring pleas of debt against Thomas Jaferes, described as a brazier of both Wiltshire and Bristol, and Henry Estrefeld, a Bristol merchant. Another Wiltshire clothier, Henry Freeze, sued the rector of St Mary-le-Port, Richard Boys, while William Fyscher, a "wolman" of Marlborough, sued a fuller from Temple Street, and John Dete, a Wells clothier, sued a Bristol merchant, John a Beke.[453]

Somerset and Wiltshire clothiers were clearly actively involved in Bristol's textile industry, but this is not reflected in the wills of Bristol testators, suggesting that the counties' clothiers were not well integrated into the lives of Bristol's propertied classes. Somerset references (apart from the usual bequests to the "mother church" of Wells Cathedral for those living south of the Avon) are mostly limited to the area immediately to the south of Bristol. There are a handful relating to Bath, but these do not suggest strong links with the city's cloth producers, with the possible exception provided by the will of the Bristol merchant John Shipward, who in 1473 provided for prayers for the souls of William Philippys, a Bath draper, and his wife Agnes. In 1401 and 1402 two Wells testators, Thomas Tanner and Richard Ferour, bequeathed property in Bristol, but there is nothing here to link them particularly with textiles.[454] In 1491 the Bristol esquire and burgess Richard Erle arranged for his anniversaries to be observed at Wells Cathedral and at Witham Friary in Somerset.[455] Between 1475 and

[449] For example, barrels of woad were bequeathed in the wills of Nicholas Bagot, 1421 (TNA PROB 11/2B/393), Thomas Rowley, 1479 (TNA PROB 11/6/479), and John Hutton, 1485 (TNA PROB 11/7/208), while in 1466 one pipe and eight measures of woad were claimed as being owed in a case between a weaver and a merchant, both from Bristol (TNA CP40/820, rot. 281), in 1488 13 pipes of woad were used as a pledge on a loan of £100 made between two Bristol merchants (GRBB, Text, Part IV, 98-100), and in 1509/10, two measures of woad were among the debts contested before the Staple Court: *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 88.

[450] *GRBB Text, Part III*, 120-22.

[451] Alan Dyer, "'Urban Decline' in England, 1377-1525", in *Towns in Decline*, ed. Slater, 266-88, at 277-8.

[452] BRO 08154/1, pp. 90, 98-9, 102, 154, 222, 362, 368-9, 372, 374, 376.

[453] *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 114, 127, 130, 132, 136, 138, 156, 159.

[454] Wadley, *Wills*, 63-4, 159.

[455] Wadley, *Wills*, 165-6; BRO 26166/295-6.

1485 the wealthy Bristol widow Alice Chestre sued the prior of Taunton Priory over the sum of £20 which he had borrowed from her and, allegedly, failed to repay.[456] Most references to Gloucestershire among Bristol testators were also, unsurprisingly, to the south of the county in the area immediately outside Bristol, and therefore not part of the Cotswolds textile region, but there is some evidence of Bristol links with this latter area. In the first decade of the fifteenth century the Bristol burgess Thomas Beaupyne asked to be buried in Cirencester, and another burgess, Philip Wynter, left a bequest to the church of Kempsford, both in the Cotswolds, while in 1441 Robert Halle bequethed property near Cirencester and Stroud, and William Fissch, a Bristol merchant, mentioned his nephew, Richard Denys, from the Cotswold village of Marshfield.[457] In 1494 Johanna Geffreys left bequests to the parish churches of Brockworth, near Cirencester, and Westerleigh, on the edge of the Cotswolds.[458] Two Bristol testators had connections with West Wiltshire: John Hertham, who in 1405 bequeathed his property in Yatesbury, and John Clerke, a mercer, who in 1473 left a bequest to the church in Warminster; while in 1407 John Somervyle of Trowbridge mentioned property in Bristol.[459] Some of these connections may have come about through the cloth industry, but it is impossible to know for certain.

In its way the economic expansion of London was as remarkable as the transformation of the woollen and cloth industries; in fact, the two phenomena were connected.[460] By the beginning of the fifteenth century London was by far the largest and wealthiest city in Britain and Ireland: with a population of around 40,000, it was over three times bigger than either York or Bristol, the two largest provincial towns. As English cloth came to dominate the markets of north-west Europe, London's proximity to the great Flemish commercial centres, and particularly Antwerp, encouraged still greater growth, so that by the end of the century its population had probably risen to around 50,000.[461] This growth in size was matched by the growth of London's commercial influence in England and Wales. The demands of so many consumers could only be satisfied by a network of suppliers that stretched across South-East England and the East Midlands; London was now the major financial centre for the whole realm, and Londoners lent money and shared in business ventures from Exeter to Newcastle and beyond. Much of the cloth produced for export to northern continental European, whether it came from Yorkshire or the Cotswolds, went to London. London merchants, or their agents, operated wherever English cloth was produced in significant quantities. By 1500 London's cloth exports were approaching eighty per cent of the national total. London's commercial dominance eroded the independence of the other ports of southern and eastern England, effectively making them mere out-ports of the great metropolis. Even Southampton shared this fate.

Bristol was able to avoid becoming such a London out-port partly because of its size, and to some extent its distance from the capital (it was 100 miles away, or an average of three days' travel), but mainly because it faced west, and so had different overseas markets from those in which London merchants dominated. However, it was still very much part of London's economic sphere of influence. For one thing, when

[456] TNA C1/60/62.
[457] Wadley, *Wills*, 78, 82, 130-3.
[458] TNA PROB 11/10/242.
[459] Wadley, *Wills*, 81-2, 254; TNA PROB 11/2A/149.
[460] Unless otherwise indicated, this paragraph is based on Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 64-83, 101-115, and eadem, "London, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 395-440, particularly 438-9.
[461] Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 238 & n. 2.

Bristol merchants wished to sell their cloth to northern mainland Europe, it was shipped through London.[462] In many cases, this meant selling the cloth to London merchants.[463] London was also a supplier of numerous commodities, including madder, an important dyestuff that came to England through Mediterranean trade routes, and hence was not imported through Bristol.[464] The city also provided a place in which Bristolians could associate with people from elsewhere who also had business there. Between 1429 and 1465 four Bristol merchants contracted debts in London with men from Somerset, Gloucestershire and Coventry.[465]

London also served as a source of credit to Bristolians: for example, in London in 1464 John Aston, a saddler of the city, lent £3 to William Joce, a Bristol mercer.[466] However, while there are numerous instances of Bristolians being sued for debts by Londoners, it is often impossible to tell from the terms of the accusation whether these debts were incurred through loans of various kinds (including mortgages on land), as bonds obliging parties to perform a promised action, or through non-payment within the agreed period of a credit arrangement in return for goods. Given the periodic shortages of coin, buying on credit was an essential part of any merchant's activity.[467] Kowaleski's analysis of debt litigation in the Exeter courts for the ten years after 1378 revealed that only seven per cent of cases involved cash loans, with a further two per cent relating to chattel loans; there were also cases where damages and amercements, rents and other debts relating to activities other than buying and selling were contested, but fully half of all cases involved sales of goods.[468] While the overwhelming majority of debt prosecutions involved Bristolians as the debtors, there are occasional examples of the reverse situation, such as the case brought before Chancery by John Lynn, a Bristol clothier, who claimed that he was unable to recover a debt from Henry Bentley, brother of a London grocer, because Bentley had taken sanctuary at Westminster, or the 1432 prosecution by Thomas Yonge and his half-brother William Canynges of a London vintner for a debt of £20.[469] Obligatory bonds could be traded just like any other commodity: for example, the bond of a glazier and a butcher, both of Bristol, to a Bristol barber and a baker was transferred to John Stokes, a citizen and grocer of London, in fulfilment of a debt.[470]

Despite the litany of accusations and recriminations that make up the majority of legal records, relations between Bristol and London merchants were probably generally cordial. Men from each place are sometimes found acting as each others' sureties. This was the case with Henry Johnson, a London salter who stood as surety for the Bristol merchant Thomas Popeley, or as business partners, as did the merchants John Brome of Bristol and Robert Ruston of London, who were sued together for a debt they owed to William Heryot, alderman of London.[471]

---

[462] Carus-Wilson, "Woollen Industry before 1550", 137 -8.
[463] For an example of a Bristolian, in this case a fuller, selling cloth in London, see TNA C1/66/354, dated to 1475/85.
[464] Bristolians' purchase of madder from London merchants feature in the following cases: TNA CP40/674, rot. 232d, CP40/807, rot. 361d, C1/46/446.
[465] TNA CP40/675, rot. 319, CP40/743, rot. 320d, CP40/813, rot. 199d, CP40/817, rot. 648.
[466] TNA CP40/828, rot. 143d.
[467] Nightingale, "Monetary contraction and mercantile credit in later medieval England".
[468] Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade*, p. 203, and 202-21 for discussion of credit and debt in Exeter's economy more generally; in addition, see Kermode, *Medieval Merchants*, pp. 230-47.
[469] TNA C 1/46/336, C 241/225/55.
[470] TNA C 1/64/567.
[471] TNA C 1/64/841, C 1/64/303. Both cases date to 1475-85.

As we have seen, Londoners were admitted as burgesses of the Bristol Staple in order to prosecute cases there: among them was the Hansard John Beess, a merchant of the Steelyard admitted in 1512.[472] Very often parties in disputes sought to resolve the issue through out-of-court arbitration, and in 1427 and 1428 two defendants before Common Pleas claimed that two different offences that had allegedly been committed in London had already been settled by arbitration in Bristol, while in 1429 the same court was told that John Burton, merchant of Bristol, had presided over an arbitration that took place in London involving an allegation of trespass that had taken place in Norton St Philip, Somerset, the previous year.[473] Clearly, some Londoners were frequent visitors to Bristol. An example of a debt contracted in Bristol between two Londoners comes from 1447, when two London drapers entered into a bond for £20 there.[474]

While there appears to have been no significant migration from London to Bristol, Londoners are found owning and buying Bristol real estate. In 1456 Thomas Wynter of London bought a property in Baldwin Street that had belonged to his father, an indication, probably, that he came from the same Bristol family as Philip Wynter, the Bristol burgess who made his will in 1407.[475] In 1495 the executors of the will of the Bristol esquire Richard Erle, made four years earlier, sold some of his Bristol property to William Nightyngale, a London draper, who perhaps bought it as an investment, while in his will of 1498 John Henlove, a Bristol dyer, mentioned a tenement in Bristol he had bought from John Forster of London, gentleman: the London Forsters had links with the Canyngeses, and may have been related to the Bristol family of the same name.[476] Perhaps the most singular indication of Londoners' intimate involvement with Bristol's commercial life comes from the Priory of St James. The nave of the priory church was parochial, and every year the churchyard and nave hosted St James's Fair, one of the most important in the Bristol region. Spaces in the churchyard and nave in which market stalls could be erected at fair time were leased out on lifetime leases. Among the lessees in the 1470s and '80s were six Londoners: a goldsmith, girdler, upholsterer, and three haberdashers, while mention is made in one of the agreements of two other Londoners who had once held spaces in the churchyard.[477]

Moving away – slightly – from business, marriage was another way in which Bristol and London society were brought together. There are numerous instances of related families from the two places. For example, between 1452 and 1454 John Adam, a girdler of London, brought a case in Chancery against the executors of a Bristol carpenter, John Redelyche, whose daughter he had married.[478] The Bristol burgess John Cogan made his will in 1474. At the beginning of the document he requested burial in Bristol, but by its end he had changed his mind, requesting burial close to the cross in St Paul's churchyard in London, this to be arranged by his son-in-law, the London mercer Robert Cobalde: one wonders what conversations were had during the course of the will's composition.[479]

---

[472] *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 153-4.
[473] TNA CP40/667, rot. 512, CP40/671, rot. 316, CP40/672, rot. 116.
[474] TNA CP40/822, rot. 242d; the case was not brought until 1467.
[475] BRO 40365/D/2/39; for Philip Wynter see above, p. 00.
[476] BRO 26166/287-9. Erle's will: Wadley, *Wills*, 165-6, 172. For Stephen Forster's association with the Canynges/Yonge family, see below.
[477] BRO P.St J/F/28/11-14,16, 18. The leases are transcribed in F. W. P. Hicks, "St James (Bristol) Fair leases", TBGAS, 57 (1935), 145-51.
[478] TNA C 1/19/429.
[479] TNA PROB 11/6/239. Additionally, at some point before 1423 a Bristol widow, Helen Harryes, married a London citizen, Walter Broueman: TNA CP40/650, rot. 332.

Perhaps the most impressive example of a kin-group with Bristol and London branches is provided by the Canynges -Yonge family.[480] The Bristol Canynges family seem to have had their origins in Cirencester and Wiltshire in the early fourteenth century, and their earliest appearance in Bristol is 1334, in the person of a John Canynges.[481] However, a branch of the family appears to have been established in London by 1356, when another John Canynges, citizen and mercer of London, was licensed to appoint an attorney in Ireland.[482] John Canynges of Bristol may have been the father of William (d. 1396), who was the father of John Canynges (d. 1405), twice mayor of Bristol. After the death of this John his widow Joan, the mother of John (fl. 1405), Thomas (1397-1466), and William Canynges (1402-1474), and at least three daughters, Agnes, Joan and Margaret, married Thomas Yonge (d. 1427), mayor of Bristol in 1411–12 and 1420–21, and descended from Welsh migrants. By this marriage she had two sons, Thomas and John, and a daughter, Alice. Thomas Yonge junior married Isabel, the daughter of John Burton, a prominent Bristol merchant, and his step-brother William Canynges married Joan, the daughter of John Mylton of Bristol.[483] While Thomas Yonge forged an early career in Bristol alongside his half-brother William, his full brother, John Yonge, found his fortune in London, where he became a grocer, alderman, and, in 1466–7, lord mayor. Meanwhile, Thomas Canynges also became a London grocer, was elected as an alderman in 1445 and lord mayor in 1456–7. Thomas Yonge's Bristol career actually had its foundations in London, where he trained as a lawyer at the Middle Temple; this allowed him to build up a legal practice in London and the West Country, and to become the Bristol recorder from 1441. He was also regularly an MP for his hometown, alongside his half-brother William Canynges. However, Thomas Yonge's later life was centred on Westminster: he was appointed as a serjeant-at-law in 1463, justice of Common Pleas in 1467, and justice of the King's Bench in 1475; he died in 1476 and was buried in the Greyfriars Church, London. By Isabel he left a son, another Thomas Yonge, who died in 1506.

In 1441William Canynges became a London grocer, like his brother and step-brother, but the same year he served the first of five terms as mayor of Bristol, and it was here, rather than London, that was the focus of his operations. He rose to pre-eminence in Bristol's mercantile elite through overseas trade and shipping, before

---

[480] Unless otherwise indicated, the following account of the Canynge-Yonge family is based on: Williams, Chantries of William Canynges, 44-85; Clive Burgess, "Canynges, William (1402–1474)", *ODNB*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4581 [accessed 1/12/2012]; A. F. Pollard, "Yonge, Sir Thomas (c.1405–1477)", rev. Nigel Ramsay, *ODNB*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30230 [accessed 1/12/2012]; L. S. Woolgar, "Young, Thomas III (d.1427), of Bristol" in *HPHC, 1386-1421*, http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/young-thomas-iii-1427 [accessed 03/12/12].

[481] Williams *Chantries of William Canynges*, 44-5. For Thomas, son and heir of John and Susan Canynges of Wiltshire, 1365-73, see TNA C 135/186/1-2, C 135/232/3; for John, of Cirencester, 1346/7, see TNA C 143/281/2.

[482] Williams *Chantries of William Canynges*, 45; in 1475 Robert de Langton of London was described as a former apprentice of this John Canynges: TNA C 131/61/14. Was this John the son of John Canynges of Bristol?

[483] According to Sherborne, William Canynges, 7, Joan was another daughter of John Burton, and therefore sister to Thomas Yonge's wife, but he cites no authority for this. Williams speculates that Joan may have been the daughter of John and Joan Mylton, on the basis of the provisions made by William Canynges in 1467 for his chantry in St Mary Redcliffe, whereby John and Joan Mylton were included among the recipients of prayers: Williams *Chantries of William Canynges*, 53, 64-5. John Mylton's will of 1436 (TNA PROB 11/3/354) proves Williams correct, since he names his daughter Joan as the wife of William Canynges, merchant of Bristol, whom he makes one of his executors, alongside Stephen Forster, the prominent London merchant.

entering the priesthood as dean of Westbury-on-Trym College in 1469. By Joan, who died in 1467, William Canynges had two sons, John (d. 1468/74), married to Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Middleton, an esquire of Stanton Drew, just south of Bristol, and William, who in 1458 married Isabel, the daughter of William Vowell, a prominent member of the Wells elite: neither son provided William with surviving grandchildren. William Canynges junior died in 1458, while in London: he made his will in the house of Stephen Forster, citizen and merchant of London, and a family friend. In this document William named his father as executor and mentioned property in Bristol and Wells which, after the decease of his wife Isabel, was to go to his brother John. The will was witnessed by Stephen Forster and John Jay, the Bristol merchant.[484]

The will of William Canynges senior, made in 1474, shows that his London kin were very close to him. To his nephew William, son of his brother Thomas, he left a valuable group of Bristol properties, with a remainder to Isabel, or Elizabeth, Thomas's daughter, now the wife of John Holden, alderman and cloth-merchant of London. By now William the testator's daughter-in-law Isabel, William junior's widow, had remarried into the Powlett family, probably of Hinton St George, Somerset, and the considerable Bristol estate he had settled on her and his son William on their marriage now, after William's death in 1458, held solely by Isabel, was to revert to William the nephew after her death. A further estate was granted to Elizabeth, the widow of William the testator's son John, for the term of her life, and after her death this was to revert to Isabel/Elizabeth Holden, the testator's niece; should she die without issue then this property was to be sold, and the proceeds divided between the Canynges chantries in St Mary Redcliffe and Bristol's common council for the use of the town.[485] Elizabeth, widow of William's son John, died in or shortly before 1479, when her Canynges property passed to Isabel/Elizabeth Holden, William's niece, according to the provisions of William's will. She and her only child Richard Holden died in or just before 1482, when her husband John came into possession of her Canynges inheritance, which, the following year, was sold as William Canynges had ordered in his will; the purchasers were John Twynyho, recorder, and the prominent Bristol burgesses William Spencer, one of the executor's of William's will, and John Byrde.

William Canynges left no son and heir to carry on his name in Bristol, but the provisions of his will meant that the London branch of the family would continue to have proprietorial interests in the town. William Canynges's nephew William, son of Thomas of London, was dead by 1480, by which time his widow Isabel had married a Bristol esquire, John Depden, indicating, by the way, that the London branch of the family were maintaining their Bristol connections. She died around four years later, at which time the Bristol property that William Canynges had settled on her first husband, his nephew William, passed to Thomas Canynges esquire, their son.[486]

London connections and the West-Country cloth industry do not exhaust Bristol's commercial networks within England. Southampton was less of a competitor with Bristol and more of a trading partner, since the bulk of its trade, handled by Italian merchants, lay with the Mediterranean.[487] Commerce between Bristol and Southampton took place overland. In most cases, the scale and nature of such trade has to be inferred from indirect evidence, since this was not subject to the centrally-directed customs

[484] Wadley, *Wills*, 153-4. This is the same Stephen Forster who appeared with William Canynges senior as an executor of the will of John Mylton: see above, n. 76.
[485] Wadley, *Wills*, 76-7, 153-4.
[486] Williams, *Canynges Chantries*, 82-3.
[487] Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 152-64.

administration, and records of locally imposed tolls do not survive. This is not the case for Southampton, where its brokage books record the tolls imposed on carts and their cargoes entering and leaving the town; these books are extant, in a broken series, from 1430.[488] Bristol was not a major destination for Southampton carters. Taking the accounting years 1443-4 and 1477-8 as examples, in the former year only 5 journeys took place to Bristol, compared to 15 each to Wotton-under-Edge and Frome, 24 to Gloucester and 54 to Oxford, while in the latter year Bristol accounted for 12 outward journeys.[489] Not surprisingly, commodities brought the hundred miles from Southampton to Bristol had to be unobtainable from the latter's own immediate hinterland or through its own overseas trade and of sufficiently high value and low bulk to justify the expense: thus, Bristol's poor showing relative to Gloucester is probably an indication of the strength of its overseas trade. The commodities bound for Bristol tended to be limited to materials for the textile industry - dyestuffs (madder), mordants (alum), black soap – and consumer luxuries such as sweet wines, almonds and dried fruit. These were not produced by Bristol's trading partners in Gascony and northern/western Iberia, but were all the stock in trade of the Italian merchants who handled Southampton's Mediterranean commerce. Bristol occasionally bought significant quantities of sweet wine, figuring as Southampton's second biggest customer for this in 1460/1 and 1461/2, fourth biggest in 1448/9, 1467/8, 1491/2, 1492/3, and fifth in 1470/1.[490] Bristol's commerce with Southampton was relatively small-scale, and tended to be handled by a small number of specialist merchants. These did not confine themselves to trading with their home town, however, and also sold goods within Southampton's own hinterland, particularly Salisbury. Hence, in the 1440s the most prominent Bristol merchant sending goods from Southampton was Nicholas Lange, and in 1444 and 1448 he sent a total of 19 cartloads, mainly of wine, alum, soap and woad, from Southampton to Salisbury, as against only seven to Bristol.[491] Bristol's trade with Southampton was not entirely in the hands of Bristolians: in the 1440s Stephen Forster of London occasionally sent consignments of alum from Southampton to Bristol.[492]

In addition to cloth, Gloucestershire supplied Bristol with timber and iron from the Forest of Dean, an enclave of the county on the Welsh side of the Severn.[493] A number of Bristolians originated in the Forest. Among them was Thomas Foxley, who in a deed of 1422 described himself as son and heir of Richard Foxley, late of Lydney, the principal town in the Forest, while the wills of several Bristol testators show Forest connections. These include the following, all of whom left bequests to churches or individuals, or bequeathed property, in the Forest: William Coder burgess and merchant, (1473), among whose legatees was William Coder of Newland, in the Forest; Robert Hynde, goldsmith and burgess (1476); Thomas Baker, grocer (1492), who

---

[488] *The Brokage Books of Southampton* have been published by the Southampton Record Society/Records Series as follows: *1439-40*, ed. B. D. M. Bunyard (1941); *1443-44*, ed. Olive Coleman, vol. I (1960), vol. II (1961); *1447-48*, ed. Winifred A. Harwood (2008); *1448-49*, ed. Elisabeth A, Lewis (1993); *1477-78*, ed. K. F. Stevens & T. E. Olding (1985). In addition, the brokage books are the subject of a major project of analysis and on-line publication based at the university of Winchester: http://www.winchester.ac.uk/academicdepartments/history/research/overland/Pages/OverlandTradeProject.aspx

[489] *1443-44*, ed. Coleman, map following 144; *1477-78*, ed. Stevens and Olding, xviii.

[490] *1443-44*, ed. Coleman, vol. II, 325-7.

[491] *1443-44*, ed. Coleman,vol. II, 168; *1447-48*, ed. Harwood, 186-7; *1448-49*, ed. Lewis, 97-101, 145-51, 188, 190, 194, 218.

[492] *1443-44*, ed. Coleman,vol. II, xxx, n. 1; *1447-48*, ed. Harwood, 154-5, 156-7, 166-7.

[493] Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 187.

mentioned Forest property he had recently purchased from his brother; Agnes Hert (1494); and Joan Abyngdon (1500).[494] In addition, the abbot of St Augustine's from 1481 to 1515, John Newland, may have taken his name from Newland.[495]

The close links between Bristol and the Forest of Dean remind us of the importance of river communications: the overland route between these two places goes via Gloucester, over thirty miles north of Bristol, entailing a journey of about fifty miles, whereas the crossing of the Severn would cut that distance in half. River traffic on the Severn extended Bristol's commercial reach far into the West Midlands. Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Worcester and other Severn ports were fully integrated into Bristol's economy. From the Middle Ages until the twentieth century much of the trade was carried out in shallow-drafted sailing barges, called trows, which sailed as far as Shropshire.[496]

Gloucester's relations with its much larger neighbour thirty miles down-river were coloured by its citizens' awareness of their port's ancillary position in the economy of the Bristol region[497]. The situation was underlined by Gloucester's position as a mere 'creek' within the Bristol custom's area, but this was merely a reflection of economic and demographic realities: Gloucester's population was probably only around a third that of Bristol, and the problems of navigating the river between the two ports encouraged sea-going vessels to tie up at Bristol rather than Gloucester. This meant that the two ports' merchants had to co-operate on a regular basis, and Gloucester merchants joined their Bristol counterparts to import goods into Bristol and then tranship them to trows for the journey north.

Coventry was more substantial than Gloucester, and as the largest city in the West Midlands it enjoyed greater economic autonomy from Bristol; indeed, it had its own substantial hinterland. However, it is land-locked, and relied on overland communication for the connection with the Severn and hence with Bristol and the southern sea. This meant that the two places had close commercial relations. Bristol supplied Coventry with wine, dyestuffs and the other commodities imported from Gascony and Iberia, as well as its own manufactured products, and in turn acted as an outlet for Coventry's goods, primarily cloth and caps.[498] Again, evidence of these

---

[494] GA D421/T4 /4; TNA PROB 11/10/148; Wadley, *Wills*, 158, 168-8; *Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' [Part 3]: Wills*, ed. Burgess, 42-3, 149-50, 158, 168-9.

[495] J. H. Bettey, "Newland , John (d. 1515)", *ODNB*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20013 [accessed 2/12/2012].

[496] For example, in 1432 Thomas Erle of Bristol chartered a ship with men from Worcester and Tewkesbury to take merchandise to France (TNA SC8/96/4757), while Severn trows, working between Bristol and Tewkesbury and carrying grain in return for general merchandise and coal, were mentioned in 1449/50: *GRBB Text, Part I*, 132. For Bristol's commerce with West Midlands' religious houses, particular Worcester Priory, see Christopher Dyer, "Trade, Towns and the Church: Ecclesiastical Consumers and the Urban Economy of the West Midlands, 1290-1540", in *The Church in the Medieval Town*, ed. T. R. Slater & Gervase Rosser (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 55-75, at 61-2, 69.

[497] This paragraph is based on Nicholas Herbert, "Medieval Gloucester: Trade and Industry, 1327-1547", in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 4: The City of Gloucester*, ed. Herbert (London: University of London Institute of Historical Research, 1988, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/source.aspx?pubid=281 [accessed 15/05/12]) 41-54, and R. A. Holt, "Gloucester: an English Provincial Town during the Later Middle Ages' (unpublished University of Birmingham Ph.D. thesis, 1987).

[498] Charles Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a City: Coventry and the Urban Crisis of the Late Middle Ages* (CUP, 1979), passim; Richard Goddard, "The Built Environment and the Later Medieval Economy: Coventry, 1200-1540", in *Coventry: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in the City and its Vicinity,* ed. Linda Monckton and Richard K. Morris, British Archaeologal Association, Conference Transactions, 33

contacts is fairly extensive and varied, but here only a few examples must suffice. Business partnerships between men of Coventry and Bristol were probably fairly common, to judge by the legal proceedings that resulted when something went wrong. In 1407 Thomas Salford, merchant of Bristol, and John Newton, the son and heir of Robert Newton, burgess of Coventry, were sued by Thomas Fauconer, citizen and mercer of London, for a debt of £220 which they had failed to settle with him. The fact that these Coventry-Bristol partners were dealing with a London mercer is interesting, as is the size of the debt, suggesting that theirs was a large-scale business venture.[499] Further evidence of Coventry-Bristol-London commercial associations is provided about sixty years later, when two London merchants, John Maleburgh and Nicholas Dokenham, together with John Holyesn of Coventry, got into a tavern fight in Bristol, and were arrested by the bailiffs.[500] At least one Coventry man thought it worthwhile becoming a burgess of the Bristol Staple in order to recover his debts there, but was unwilling or unable to do so in person: in 1512 John Hardwever of Coventry appointed his servant William Foster as his attorney in the court.[501] Coventry men sometimes held property in Bristol, as is apparent from Thomas Yonge's will of 1426, which describes his Bristol tenements as located next to those of John Prishton of Coventry, John Droys and William Colyns of Gloucester, and Reginald Jacob of Dorchester.[502] Migration from Coventry to Bristol has already been encountered in relation to the movement south of the families of Botoner and Byrde, and doubtless there were more.

Bristol was evidently regularly frequented by Coventry merchants, but the movement was not all one way. Coventry's guild, or fraternity, of the Holy Trinity attracted members from far and wide, in a similar manner to Ludlow's Palmers Guild. The surviving membership list, compiled between 1340 and 1450, includes 35 Bristol men, mostly accompanied by their wives. Most of these members can be identified as living in the later fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries, and some may have joined as groups of friends or extended kin. Among them were William and Agnes Canynges, the grandparents of William Canynges (d. 1474). The inclusion of the name of Richard Fynche's late wife Joan, alongside his current wife Katherine, indicates that Bristolians were not only attracted by whatever entrée, if any, it offered to Coventry society, but also by its promise of spiritual benefits.[503]

The importance of Bristol to Coventry traders is suggested by a case brought before the royal Council in 1500, in which the mayor and commonalty of Coventry complained that, despite having been granted the privilege of being free of toll throughout the realm by Edward III, their merchants had long been charged Keyage by Bristol for using the Key at the New Cut, the wide, deep channel constructed for the Frome in the thirteenth century. Bristol's justification for this charge was that, while merchants were free to use the Avon, and its Back, for loading and discharging cargoes, the Key had been constructed at great cost (£5000, supposedly) by Bristolians and needed to be maintained. The compromise reached by both sides was that a reduced

---

(Leeds: Maney, 2011), 33-47; Donald Leech, "Stability and Change at the End of the Middle Ages: Coventry, 1450-1525", *Midland History*, 34:1 (2009), 1-21; Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 187-8.

[499] TNA C 131/55/25.

[500] TNA C 1/29/289.

[501] *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 143.

[502] Wadley, *Wills*, 115.

[503] *The Register of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, St Mary, St John the Baptist and St Katherine of Coventry*, ed. Mary Dormer Harris, Dugdale Society, 13 (1935), 68, 88, 110. This was also the case with Ludlow's Palmer's Guild.

charge would henceforth be levied.[504] That Coventry merchants were using the Key, and thus incurring tolls in order to take advantage of the New Cut's deep-water channel, suggests that they were using this facility as part of an operation to transfer goods between the trows and other small vessels used on the Severn and sea-going ships.

The Shropshire town of Ludlow was another place linked to Bristol by the Severn and its tributaries.[505] The popularity of the town's Palmers Guild with Bristolians was but one indication of the close relationship between the two towns, despite being separated by nearly a hundred miles. Cargoes bound for Ludlow were shipped as far as Bewdley, from where they were transferred to carts. By this means Bristol supplied the town with wine, fish and dyestuffs, among other commodities. Evidence from Ludlow demonstrates the ease of waterborne transport compared to its overland equivalent: in the 1420s the carriage of a pipe of Bordeaux wine from Bristol to Bewdley, a distance of nearly eighty miles, by river, cost 15d, whereas the twenty miles by cart from there to Ludlow cost at least twice that amount.[506]

At least two prominent Bristolians had strong Ludlow connections. While the Coder family of Bristol had members in the Forest of Dean, they originated in Ludlow with Walter Coder, merchant and bailiff of the town, whose son William moved to Bristol, where he flourished, becoming mayor in 1452-3, 1457-8, and 1464-5. In his will of 1473 William Coder left bequests to the church of St Laurence and the friars in Ludlow, who were asked to pray for his soul. [507] Robert Sturmy, the Bristol entrepreneur and adventurer, may have come from Ludlow, although there was at least one Bristol Sturmy before him (Walter, a merchant active in the 1380s), and he may also have been related to the Wiltshire gentry family of the same name.[508] However, his will, made in June 1457 before the fatal voyage into the Mediterranean, contains bequests to the priests of St Mary's College in Ludlow, to the friars of Woodhouse, in the nearby Clee Hills, as well as to the nearby parish church of Knighton, in Worcestershire, and he appointed a Ludlow draper as overseer.[509]

Writing in 1480, William Worcestre noted the variety of vessels tied up at Bristol's Avon quayside, known then as the Back, and to later generations as Welsh Back,

> …from the ports of the Welsh towns. They are from the towns and havensof Tenby, Milford Haven, Haverfordwest, Laugharne haven, Llanstephanhaven, Kidwelly haven, Swansea haven, Neath haven, Cardiff haven, Newport haven, Usk haven, Caerleon haven, Tintern abbey on the riverWye, Chepstow haven, "Betysley water" on the river Wye [Beachley?],and other harbours or havens from the counties and ports of Cornwall,laden with tin, fish etc., and from the ports of Devonshire and Somersetshire. They moor their ships at The Back on the rising tide, tounload and discharge their ships of their goods.[510]

---

[504] *GWBB*, 5, 67-71. The 1373 grant of freedom from toll to Coventry was copied into Bristol's Great Red Book: *GRBB, Text, Part I*, 93.

[505] Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 187. In 1467 the king ordered that the claim of the burgesses of Ludlow to be able to trade freely in Bristol be brought before him: *LRBB*, vol. 1, 17-19.

[506] Farady, *Ludlow*, 107, 131. See also Dyer, "Trade, Towns and the Church", 67-8.

[507] Farady, *Ludlow*, 134; Wadley, *Wills*, 149-50. Between 1486 and1493 William Coder's grandson William Colwell brought a Chancery suit against Maude, executrix and widow of William Wodyngton, a Bristol merchant and an executor of Coder's will, claiming that Maude was withholding from him deeds relating to Ludlow property, as well as money and woad that Coder had bequethed to him: TNA C 1/87/9.

[508] Walter: TNA C 241/178/133, C 131/206/39; will of Sir William Sturmy of Wiltshire, 1427: TNA PROB 11/3/134.

[509] Wadley, *Wills*,138. For the 1457 voyage, see above, 00-00.

[510] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 251.

Here Worcestres reminds us that Bristol enjoyed a coasting trade with the South-West Peninsula. In 1437-8, when a unique survival of the return for town toll (rather than those customs returns made up for the Exchequer), allows us to make some sort of comparison between all the ports, foreign and domestic, with which Bristol traded, Bristol's most significant trading partners in this region were Padstow, St Ives and Minehead, and the cargoes mostly consisted of fish, with tin, hides and cloth also being carried. Twenty-eight voyages between Bristol and south-west ports were noted in this year, approaching the number of voyages from Bristol to Ireland (at least 32, but perhaps as many as 40) and nearly twice as many as the trips from Bristol to Welsh ports (around 17).[511] However, this is probably not an accurate reflection of the actual patterns of Bristol's trade, and the South West is likely to have been of less importance than these figures suggest. In fact, Worcestre's emphasis on the Welsh ports in this passage is probably a fair reflection of their importance relative to those in the Peninsula.

Worcestre methodically lists the ports along the South Wales coast with which Bristol traded, beginning with the westernmost, Tenby and Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire, and ending, probably, with Beachley, at the confluence of the Wye and the Severn. In assessing the nature and scale of Bristol's commercial links with Wales we are faced by the problem that customs were not collected by Crown officials in the ports with which Bristol traded, since this was left up to the Marcher lords, whose customs records have generally not survived, so, as with the town's English commerce, we have to piece together the picture from a range of more or less tangential and fragmentary materials.[512]

Bristol had played a major part in Anglo-Norman expansion into South Wales and its presence continued to be felt throughout the region; it served, effectively, as the regional capital for South-East Wales, encompassing Monmouthshire (modern Gwent) and at least the eastern half of Glamorgan, but, as Worcestre realised, it maintain strong commercial links right along the coast to Pembrokeshire. [513] Bristol's merchants had long enjoyed exemption from tolls in

---

[511] Henry Bush, *Bristol Town Duties: A Collection of Original and Interesting Documents [etc.]* (Bristol, 1828), Chapter 1, "Origins of the Grant of the Town of Bristol", 5-42. While this is a valuable source, there are problems with its interpretation which preclude the extrapolation of precise, meaningful statistics from it: not all of the ports can be identified, and there are 17 Bristol-based ships for whom details of voyages are not given; also, while a number of voyages to and from ports for whom freedom of toll had been granted are included and noted as "free2, there must be a suspicion that in these cases record-keeping may have been less than complete. Significantly perhaps, most of the Welsh ports listed by Worcestre in 1480 are not included. For an undated list of exempted places, see ibid., Chapter 2, "Origin of the Town Dues", 43-83.

[512] Maryanne Kowaleski, "Port Towns: England and Wales, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 467-94, at 474; Carus-Wilson and Coleman, *England's Export Trade*, 176.

[513] This paragraph is drawn from: Christopher Dyer, "Modern Perspectives on Medieval Welsh Towns", in *Wales and the Welsh in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. A. Griffiths and P. R. Schofield (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2011), 163-79, at 168; Simon A. C. Penn, "Social and Economic Aspects of Fourteenth-Century Bristol" (Unpublished University of Birmingham PhD thesis, 1989), 33-4, 42-4; T. A. James, "The Boroughs of Medieval Pembrokeshire: Haverfordwest", in *Pembrokeshire County History, Volume II: Medieval Pembrokeshire*, ed. R. F. Walker (Haverfordwest: Pembrokeshire Historical Society, 2002), 431-60, at 451; John Howells, "The Boroughs of Medieval Pembrokeshire: Pembroke", in *Pembrokeshire County History*, ed. Walker, 468-76, at 471-2; R. F. Walker, "The Boroughs of Medieval Pembrokeshire: Tenby", in *Pembrokeshire County History*, ed. idem, 479-503, at 496-7; Spencer Dimmock, "Haverfordwest: an Exemplar for the Study of Southern Welsh Towns in the Later Middle Ages", *Welsh History Review*, 22 (2004), 1-28, at 16-17; idem, "Reassessing the Towns of Southern Wales in the Later Middle Ages", *Urban History*, 32 (2005), 33-45, at 42; *Boroughs of Medieval Wales*, ed. R. A. Griffiths (Cardiff : Wales UP, 1978), 30, 147-8, 152-3, 308, 317; idem, "Medieval Severnside: the Welsh Connection", in his *Conquerors and*

South Wales. The lower customs duties within the Marcher lordships that extended across South Wales meant that the coast provided a number of attractive entrepôts, so that Gascon or Iberian wine was regularly imported here, before being transferred to small coasting vessels to be shipped to Bristol: for nine months in 1479-80, for example, an average of one ship per month from Tenby or Chepstow docked at Bristol. Notwithstanding that the Bristol customs area extended as far as Chepstow, this port seems to have played its part in the systematic evasion of English customs. As well as benefitting from "tax-avoidance", Wales also produced a range of its own commodities, among which cheap cloth, hides, beans and grain were prominent, and these too were regularly imported through Bristol. William Clifford was a Bristolian with interests in the Welsh cloth trade. In his will of 1498 Clifford left a number of bequests to his brother-in-law Richard Draper in Brecon, including two Brecon cloths, two pieces of frieze from John Goldsmythe of Tenby, and such debts as the landlady of the New Inn at Chepstow, and Thomas, the little barber of Chepstow, owed him. He also mentioned a servant who was probably Welsh, William Cradocke. So, we can surmise without pushing the evidence too far, Clifford evidently married into a Brecon family – probably also in the textile business, to judge by his brother-in-law's surname - and traded with them and with merchants in Tenby, in the far south-west of Wales; the journey west often involved a stay at Chepstow's New Inn, where he would avail himself of the services of a local barber, and to both of whom he lent money.[514]

In return for Welsh produce, a wide range of commodities were exported, including bells, cast in Bristol and occasionally still to be heard in Welsh churches. During Glyn Dŵr's rebellion, in 1403-4, Bristol supplied the besieged castles at Cardiff and Newport (Gwent).[515] Bristol's Welsh trade was fully integrated into its long-distance commerce with mainland Europe, and undertaken by those same merchants who traded with Gascony, Iberia and Iceland.

Ireland was a significant trading partner for Bristol. From the time of Henry II's incursions into Ireland, Bristol had played a vital part in facilitating the pursuit of English political and economic ambitions across the Irish Sea.[516] In particular, it had a close relationship with Waterford, which in the later Middle Ages was perhaps the most 'English' of Irish towns, in that it saw itself as a dependable enclave of English rule in an otherwise uncertain world of shifting allegiances, and closely modelled its constitutional and administrative arrangements on English practice, particularly that found in Bristol, its major trading partner. Waterford merchants were free of toll in Bristol. During the fourteenth century Bristolians were prominent among its citizens,

---

Conquered in Medieval Wales (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1994), 1-18, at 16-18; idem, "Wales and the Marches", in *CUHB*, 681-714, at 711-12; idem, "After Glyn Dŵr: an Age of Reconciliation?", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 117 (2002), 139-64, at 152-3; R. R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales, 1063-1415* (2nd edn., OUP, 2000), 24-55; Tony Hopkins, "The Towns", in *The Gwent County History, Volume 2: The Age of the Marcher Lords, c.1070-1536*, ed. R. A. Griffiths, Tony Hopkins and Ray Howell (Cardiff: Wales UP/Gwent County History Association, 2008), 115-41, at 126-7; Jeremy Knight, "The Parish Churches", in *Gwent County History*, ed. Griffiths, Hopkins and Howell, 167-82, at 180; R. R. Davies, "Plague and Revolt", in *Gwent County History*, ed. Griffiths, Hopkins and Howell, 217-40, at 231; Bowly, "The Land Divides", passim.

[514] TNA PROB 11/11/552.

[515] The standard modern account of the rebellion is R. R. Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (OUP, 1995).

[516] Unless otherwise indicated, these two paragraphs are based on Bowly, "The Land Divides", passim. For Bristol's trade with Ireland, see also Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 191-201; Wendy Childs and Timothy O'Neill, "Overseas Trade", in *A New History of Ireland: II Medieval Ireland, 1169-1534*, ed. Art Cosgrove (2nd edn., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 492-524.

and participated in military operations against its enemies.[517] The exigencies of fifteenth-century politics continued to enmesh the two towns in a shared theatre of military operations and factional loyalties.

Unlike Wales, we are able to use Bristol's customs accounts to build up a more detailed picture of Bristol-Irish trade. Over half of all voyages into or out of the port of Bristol in the fifteenth century as a whole involved an Irish port. The unique 1437-8 town toll return shows the domination of Irish ports, with at least 32 voyages from Ireland to Bristol, as against 28 from the South West (Cornwall, Devon, Somerset), 17 from Wales and 8 from Gascony; the contrast is even more apparent in terms of sailings from Bristol, where Irish ports figured as the destination in at least 20 voyages, as against a mere handful – under double figures – for all other destinations combined. Yet Ireland was a junior partner compared to mainland Europe when it came to the total value of cargoes, never accounting for more than thirty per cent of Bristol's annual customable trade by value, including wine. The solution to this conundrum lies partly in the nature of those cargoes, since around eighty per cent of Bristol's Irish imports were made up of fish, which, like the next most important Irish import commodity, hides, was relatively high in bulk but low in value.[518] Bristol's major export was broadcloth: while it dominated the Bristol-Irish export market, Ireland rarely accounted for more than thirty per cent of Bristol's total cloth exports. The means by which these commodities were transported also helps towards an explanation, since the vessels employed in the Irish trade were on average considerably smaller than those employed in Gascon and Iberian commerce. Merchants who specialised in the Bristol-Ireland trade tended to run simpler, smaller-scale operations than those who dealt mainly with mainland Europe, than whom each individual "Irish" trader, on average, sent out fewer ships.[519] With fewer voyages per head than their continental trading counterparts, it follows that the 'Irish' traders must have been more numerous. Less wealthy, they were also less prominent in civic life, despite their larger numbers. While a small handful of specialist Irish merchants figured among Bristol's civic officers in the early fifteenth century, there were none by its end. Indeed, many of these traders were in all probability not Bristolians at all, but Irish, and resident in the ports of southern Ireland with which Bristol traded most intensively, such as Kinsale, Wexford, Waterford, Limerick, Cork, Sligo, Galway and Youghal. This was the case in the sixteenth century, and if this were so a century earlier then it would explain why so few appear in the Bristol records outside of the customs returns. While at the beginning of the fifteenth century most of the ships employed in the Bristol-Ireland trade were Irish, this proportion steadily decreased, until by its end most of the shipping had Bristol as its home port, even if many of the merchants who used them were Irish.[520] This decline was matched by a fall in the volume and value of the Bristol's Irish trade. While in the first decade of the fifteenth century Irish merchandise made up around twenty per cent of Bristol's total imports, this had halved by the 1490s, by when Ireland's consumption of cloth exports had also fallen, from a highpoint of thirty-five per cent of cloth exports at the beginning of the century to less than twelve per cent at its end. The trade in grain, wool, woolfells and hides also shrank.[521]

---

[517] Brendan Smith, "Late Medieval Ireland and the English Connection: Waterford and Bristol, ca. 1360-1460", *Journal of British Studies*, 50:3 (2011), 546-65.
[518] Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 196-8.
[519] Childs and O'Neill, "Overseas Trade", in *Medieval Ireland*, ed. Cosgrove, 492-524, at 517-9.
[520] Carus-Wilson, "Overseas Trade", 195.
[521] Childs & O'Neill, 'Overseas trade', pp. 502-7, 513-5.

Among Bristol property-holders in Ireland was the Bristol-Irishman John Banbury, burgess, who in his will of 1404 left bequests to Limerick, where he held property.[522] Thomas Knap, five times mayor of Bristol between 1386 and 1404, the year of his death, held eight houses in Cork.[523] In his will of 1421 Lawrence Warmestre, burgess of Bristol, left £5 to Waterford's Cathedral, bequests to the Dominicans and Friars Minor, and £2 to the parish church of nearby New Ross.[524] In 1475 Walter Lincoln, or Lincoll, of Bristol and Ireland, was granted two tenements in St Thomas's Street by Edmund Aleyne, alias Dene, a Galway merchant, while in his will of 1484 Walter left three tenements in Waterford to his wife Isabel, with remainders to his son and brother, on condition that they kept his anniversary in Christchurch, Waterford.[525]. Richard Galeway (Galway), son of Geoffrey Galeway, burgess, merchant, and a "governor" of Kinsale, was resident in later fifteenth-century Bristol.[526] In addition, St Augustine's Abbey held lands in County Kildare, and St Mark's Hospital also held Irish estates.[527] Inevitably, Bristolians' associations with Ireland were not always happy: in his will of 1407 John Beauper of St Werburgh's parish left 40s. for the redemption of his kinsman, Richard, languishing in an Irish prison, and provided that more money should be forthcoming from his estate if this proved insufficient to liberate him.[528]

While Bristol's specialist Irish merchants tended to be distinct from those trading with mainland Europe, this does not mean that the port's Irish trade was pursued in a vacuum, cut off from other important commercial partners. The interdependence of some of Bristol's trading partners is demonstrated by two cases before the Chancery Court. The first, dating to the 1380s, was brought by John Asch, a merchant of Drogheda, who purchased at Bristol merchandise to the value of £34 from two London grocers. The second was brought in the 1450s by the French émigré Bernard Bensyn, who alleged that in 1449, when he was still a resident of Bordeaux, he had agreed with Bernard Brennyng of Bristol to ship Gascon wine for him to Ireland. In both cases the plaintiffs claim not to have been paid.[529] Bristol and Irish merchants formed business partnerships, as was the case with the Bristol-Irishman Walter Seymour of Bristol and Thomas Baillebien of Limerick, who appeared before Bristol's Staple Court in 1402 to recover a debt of £30 from a Cirencester merchant for merchandise purchased at Bristol, and John Butler of Waterford, who in the 1480s used Walter Lincoll of Bristol to sell his fish in that town.[530] A rather different instance of a three-way relationship, this time between Bristol, Ireland, and Wales, is provided by the

---

[522] Wadley, *Wills*, p. 70. L. S. Woodger, "Banbury, John II (d.1404/5), of Limerick, Ire. and Bristol", in *History of Parliament: 1386-1421* [accessed 03/12/12].
[523] Dryburgh & Smith, *Sources for Medieval Ireland*, pp. 139-40; "Knap, Thomas (d.1404), of Bristol", *History of Parliament: 1386-1421* [accessed 03/12/12].
[524] TNA PROB 11/2b/379.
[525] BRO P.St S/D/11/1-2; TNA PROB 11/7/85. *Handbook and Select Calendar of Sources for Medieval Ireland in the National Archives of the United Kingdom*, ed. Paul Dryburgh and Brendan Smith (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), 138.
[526] *Handbook and Select Calendar of Sources for Medieval Ireland*, ed. Dryburgh and Smith, 142. Is Geoffrey the Geoffrey Galway of Limerick for whom a Portuguese royal safe-conduct was issued in 1488: Childs and O'Neill, "Overseas Trade", in *Medieval Ireland*, ed. Cosgrove, 498?
[527] *Cartulary of St Augustine's Abbey*, ed. Walker, xxiv; *The Cartulary of St Mark's Hospital, Bristol,* ed. C. D. Ross, BRS, 21 (1959), xi, nos. 443-5.
[528] TNA PROB 11/2a/270.
[529] *Handbook and Select Calendar of Sources for Medieval Ireland,* ed. Dryburgh and Smith, 130, 149; *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, no. 127.
[530] *Handbook and Select Calendar of Sources for Medieval Ireland*, ed. Dryburgh and Smith, 138, 150-1, TNA C131/219/46.

allegation made by the abbot of Tintern between 1426 and 1432, that in 1412 he had despatched a servant, Matthew Yonge, to the abbey's cell in Ireland in order to save a silver gilt cross from rebels; Yonge brought the cross to Bristol, where the mayor, Thomas Yonge (probably a relation), unjustly detained it, and continued to withhold it from the abbey.[531]

Irish and Welsh in Bristol

Bristol was no exception to the rule that no pre-modern town was able to sustain its population without considerable inward migration, given the higher than (an already fearsome) national average imbalance of deaths over surviving births in an urban environment.[532] Few of the town's population would have had grandparents who had been Bristolians born and bred. The Canynges family, recorded as Bristol residents over four generations, were very much the exception. As Penn suggested on the basis of his analysis of early fourteenth-century toponyms, most of this necessary immigration probably came from a radius of about fifty miles, and so extended no further than the surrounding counties of Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire. The bulk of Bristol's migrant population were therefore English. As we have seen, the number of aliens in Bristol was tiny, and statistically insignificant. However, there were two much more numerous minorities adding to Bristol's ethnic mix: the Irish and the Welsh.[533] Unlike the fifteenth-century English migrants, their immediate, personal origins, as either Irish or Welsh, often allow us to identify them as such with some confidence, and the contrasting attitudes towards them of the majority English population tell us something about these Bristolians' outlook on the wider world beyond their own community.

Very few of the Irish found in Bristol, or who can be identified as having been involved in Bristol's Irish trade, had Gaelic names; it might therefore be assumed that with very few exceptions – possibly limited to servants for whom no surnames are recorded, beyond "Irisch", or similar generic markers of origin – all of the Irish with whom English and Welsh Bristolians came into contact were descended from colonists. However, to do this ignores the possibility that some had changed their names in order to sound more English: this was certainly common practice among Gaels hoping to forge a career within the 'English' territories in Ireland, even before it became a legal requirement, and so it is highly likely that an unknown percentage of the Bristol-Irish were Gaelic.[534] Such, apparently, was John Toky of Limerick, who traded cloth and hides between Ireland and Flanders under that name until the 1380s, when he began to establish himself in Bristol where, as John Banbury, he prospered, becoming mayor in 1397, the year in which he also represented his adopted town in parliament. He died in

[531] TNA C1/2/6.
[532] Jane Laughton, "Mapping the Migrants: Welsh, Manx and Irish Settlers in Fifteenth-Century Chester", in *Mapping the Medieval City*, ed. Clarke, 169-83, at 169.
[533] A fuller version of the following discussion appeared as Peter Fleming, "Identity and Belonging: Irish and Welsh in Fifteenth-Century Bristol", in *The Fifteenth Century VII: Conflicts, Consequences and the Crown in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007), 175-193. Given that a high proportion of Bristol's Irish and Welsh would have been descended, wholly or in part, from English colonists, the definition of their ethnicity is not straightforward. Here, they are referred to as "Irish" or "Welsh" for the sake of simplicity, and while the question of their cultural identity is pursued, my treatment of them still ignores some difficult questions.
[534] J. A. Watt, "Approaches to the History of Fourteenth-Century Ireland", in *Medieval Ireland*, ed. Cosgrove, 303-13, at 308-9; Watt, "The Anglo-Irish Colony under Strain, 1327-99", in ibid., 352-96, at 387-8, 395.

1404/5, and while he asked to be buried in Bristol he also left bequests to Limerick.[535] The fact that John Toky evidently found it necessary to change his name before he could build his career in Bristol is probably an indication that its majority English population were not well-disposed towards the Gaelic Irish.

In the period from 1390 to 1440 a small number of Irish joined Toky /Banbury at the head of Bristol's civic elite: Walter Seymour, John Preston, John Sely and Nicholas Devenyssh were sheriffs in, respectively, 1392/3, 1397/8, 1402/3 and 1426/7, and Sely and Devenyssh held office as mayor in 1410/11 and 1436. Devenyssh's son Thomas (d. 1426) was bailiff of the Tolzey Court, and in 1452 his son, another Thomas, became one of its clerks.[536] Respected in a different sphere was Robert Londe, the schoolmaster of Newgate of whom William Worcestre wrote: he was born in Ireland, and had arrived in England by 1419; he took up his post at Newgate by 1426 at the latest.[537] Their careers suggest that these Irishmen, at least, were fully integrated into Bristol society. Their English-sounding names do not betray their origins. What identifies them as Irish is that Seymour, Preston, Sely, Nicholas Devenyssh and Londe all purchased licences to remain in England in response to royal proclamations issued between 1394 and 1439, ordering Irish living in England to return home. These were issued in an effort to tackle what were perceived to be severe problems of depopulation in the Anglo-Irish territories, as a significant decline in the economic and security situation prompted many to abandon the island for England and Wales. The effects were felt in Bristol, to judge by a petition to the royal council of 1381/2 requesting more effective action to restore peace in Ireland in order to stem the flow of Irish refugees into Bristol and Cornwall.[538]

While these proclamations were not in themselves discriminatory, in the sense that the Irish were ordered to return in order to help with a crisis in Ireland, not because they were unwelcome in England, they do mark the beginning of a period of obvious hostility towards the Irish living in England, at both popular and official levels. Bristol was far from being immune to such sentiments, and it is quite possible that here they were partly encouraged by anxiety at the presence of an increasing number of less substantial Irish refugees in the town. A striking example of Crown hostility towards, or ignorance about, the king's Irish subjects is provided by the first alien subsidy of 1440, which included them as aliens.[539] Whether the product of deliberate policy or merely an oversight, the mistake was rectified in subsequent grants of alien subsidy. The difference in the number of "aliens" listed in the Bristol returns to the 1440 grant (made in 1440 and 1441) and the number of subsidy payers in subsequent returns is dramatic: in the two returns in 1440 and 1441 there were, respectively, 853 and 410 assessed

---

[535] L. S. Woodger, "Banbury, John II (d. 1404/5), of Limerick, Ire. And Bristol", *HPHC, 1386-1421*[http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/banbury-john-ii-14045, accessed 15/05/12].

[536] Fleming, "Identity and Belonging", 179.

[537] Nicholas Orme, *Education in the West of England, 1066-1548* (Exeter UP, 1976), 38-40; Londe's Irish origins are demonstrated by his purchase of a licence to remain in England, as an Irishman, in 1430, and his inclusion in the 1440 alien subsidy: Carus-Wilson, "Overseas trade of Bristol", 195-6; TNA E179/113/103.

[538] Kevin Down, "Colonial Society and Economy", in *Medieval Ireland*, ed. Cosgrove, 439-91, at 449; Art Cosgrove, "The Emergence of the Pale, 1399-1447", in ibid., 533-56, at 553; J. L. Bolton, "Irish Migration to England in the Late Middle Ages: The Evidence of 1394 and 1440", *Irish Historical Studies*, 32 (2000), 1-21; Wendy Childs, "Irish Merchants and Seamen in Late Medieval England", ibid., 22-43; Smith, "Late Medieval Ireland and the English Connection", 551; TNA SC8/118/589.

[539] For a more detailed discussion of these figures, and a more extended justification of the methodology employed in their interpretation, see Fleming, "Identity and Belonging", 179-81, and references cited therein.

individuals; in the returns to the grants of alien subsidy made in 1449 and 1453, which did not include the Irish, there were on average just 21. While the difference between the 1440 and 1441 returns must raise doubts about the dependability of these figures as an accurate representation of actual population levels, the overall trend is clear: but what does it mean? Given the small size of Bristol's population of genuine aliens (that is, those not born as subjects of the king of England), it seems reasonable to assume that the difference between the 1440/1 and later returns is made up largely of the Irish. As such, these data indicate that Bristol's Irish population in the early 1440s was of the order of 390 to 830 adults; in fact, allowing for exemptions and evasions, these numbers should probably be increased by a factor that is probably small but undeterminable. Given Bristol's population of a little less than 10,000, this would mean that the Irish made up around four to nine per cent of that figure: a small, but significant minority.

Of the 131 male householders assessed for the alien subsidy in 1441only one, Edmund Broun, shared his name with a civic office holder, and this man, a bailiff in 1421/2, rose no higher. While it is probable that the wealthier were better placed to avoid paying the subsidy, this in itself is unlikely to explain why the Irish appear to have been absent from high civic office by 1441. In fact, by this time there is clear evidence that official attitudes – at guild and civic level – had grown hostile to the Bristol Irish. In 1439 the Irish were banned from membership of both the Common Council and the guilds of hoopers, fletchers and bowyers.[540] In 1455 the ordinance imposing differential fees for native and alien apprentices entering the freedom included the Irish among the latter: an attempt by the Irish burgess Henry May to argue for the exemption of his Irish-born apprentice from the higher fee was met with stiff resistance from the mayor and common council, and the affair spawned several suits before the Chancery court and an attempt by the civic authorities to secure a private act of parliament recognising their discrimination against Irish-born apprentices; the bill appears not to have been passed, its progress halted, it seems, by a concerted lobbying campaign by Bristol's Irish community.[541] Whatever success the Bristol Irish may have gained from this episode did not halt the discrimination: in 1479 the guild of bowyers and fletchers passed an ordinance restricting membership to those who were "no Rebelle of Irelonde nor Alyen".[542]

The exclusion of Irish from public office and the crafts occurred at the same time as the decline of Bristol's Irish trade and the displacement of Irish ship owners by their Bristol counterparts. This marginalisation of the Bristol-Irish and the decline in Ireland's economic importance may be reflected in the data from Bristol wills discussed above, which show that its overall ranking among the places mentioned by testators dropped from fourth to seventh either side of 1450. The overall impression is of a Bristol-Irish population which, even if it did not decline in size during the course of the fifteenth century (and we cannot know if it did or not), did undergo a change in its socio-economic composition, so that by the dawn of the sixteenth century most were relatively poor and took no part in the town's governance at any level.[543] If by the 1430s Bristol's English elite were concerned that the town's Irish minority would constituted a

[540] *LRBB*, vol. 1, 86-8; *GRBB, Text, Part I*, 151.
[541] Fleming, "Identity and Belonging", 182-3.
[542] *GRBB, Text, Part I*, 151.
[543] This seems not to have happened in Chester, which also had long-standing links with Ireland and a significant Irish population: Laughton, "Mapping the Migrants", 177-9; eadem, *Life in a Medieval City: Chester, 1275-1520* (Oxford: Windgather Press, 2008), 176.

disreputable element, then by the end of the century their own actions had gone a long way towards making this a self-fulfilling prophecy.[544]

By contrast, there is no evidence that the Bristol-Welsh were subjected to discrimination at civic or guild level, even at the beginning of the century, during the great Welsh rebellion against English rule led by Owain Glyn Dŵr. From the rebellion's outbreak in 1400 the Crown was well aware of Bristol's sensitive strategic position relative to Wales, and the town had the dubious privilege of receiving a quarter of Gronw ap Tudur, one of the first of Glyn Dŵr's followers to be executed, which in September of that year was ordered to be displayed on St Leonard's Gate, facing Wales, while the following month the sheriff was instructed to proclaim that, while north Wales had risen, the people of south Wales remained loyal, and so should not be molested.[545] By February 1401 the Commons were getting nervous about conditions in the Marches, and MPs pressed for more concerted action against the rebels, supporting their demands with the accusation that the Welsh had raised rebellion, "…against the mayors, customs officers and other royal officers and ministers, especially in Bristol…", but while there had been recent disturbances on the streets of Bristol, there is no evidence of these having been either fomented by, or directed at, the Welsh.[546] Glyn Dŵr's rebellion had largely petered out by 1409, but conditions in the marches remained unsettled, and Bristol MPs added their voices to complaints in parliament about Welsh attacks on travellers in 1411 and again as late as 1427, while sterner measures against Welsh thieves were called for in 1449.[547] In fact, such complaints long predated the Glyn Dŵr Rebellion, which only exacerbated levels of disorder that were largely the product of the problems of law enforcement in the fragmented marcher jurisdictions.[548]

In 1413, in the aftermath of the rebellion, a royal proclamation ordered that the Welsh, like the Irish, had to return home.[549] Eight Bristolians purchased licences to remain, and of these three shared their name, and are therefore assumed to have been identical with, a member of the town's civic elite. Of these, two were also MPs: David Dudbroke, alias ap Adam, who sat in the parliament of 1411 (and so, presumably, was among those complaining about Welsh disorder); and Thomas Yonge, alias Mere, who sat in 1414. This was the same Thomas Yonge who married into the Canynges family. Dudbroke had been a resident merchant of Bristol since at least 1398, was a common councillor from 1409 to 1422, sheriff in 1416/7, and constable of the staple from 1412 to 1414; his elder brother, Robert (d. 1409/10), was mayor in 1404/5.[550] The other presumed Welsh licensee office-holders were James Cokkes, mayor in 1419/20, and David Ruddock, sheriff in the same year. All five, the Dudbroke brothers, Yonge, Cokkes

---

[544] Certainly, by the later 16th century Irish vagrancy was considered a serious problem in Bristol: Fleming, "Ethnic minorities, 1500-1685", in Dresser and Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City*, 37.

[545] *CPR, 1399-1401*, 359, 555.

[546] *PROME*, January 1401 Parliament, viii, 104-5; Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 167-8.

[547] *PROME*, November 1411 Parliament, iii, 663; October 1427 Parliament, iv, 332; February 1449 Parliament, v, 151. A Bristol man travelling into Wales to settle a debt contracted in Bedminster was allegedly kidnapped and held to ransom in 1438: *CPR, 1436-41*, 198.

[548] Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 163-7.

[549] *CPR, 1413-16*, 122, 124-5.

[550] L. S. Woolgar, "Dudbroke, David alias David ap Adam, of Bristol", *HPHC, 1386-1421* [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/dudbroke-david-alias-david-ap-adam, accessed 03/12/12]; idem, "Young, Thomas III (d.1427), of Bristol" in ibid. [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/young-thomas-iii-1427, accessed 03/12/12].

and Ruddock, were part of Bristol's civic elite at the height of the Glyn Dŵr rebellion. Events across the border do not seem to have made life difficult for Bristol's Welsh burgesses at this time. These men would have rubbed shoulders with their Irish counterparts, Walter Seymour, John Preston and John Sely, but whereas the Irish were subsequently excluded from civic office, the Welsh presence within Bristol's civic and commercial elite actually increased towards the end of the century.

The status of the Welsh as fully-fledged subjects of the king of England was always recognised in the grants of alien subsidy, and they were specifically excluded, so this source is denied us as a means of assessing the size of the Bristol-Welsh population. However, another means is provided by distinctive Welsh naming practices.[551] Identifying individuals as Welsh through such means has its obvious problems: a native Bristolian carrying a Welsh name need not have had any particular connection with Wales, nor have identified him or herself as Welsh; in addition, the patronymic system was breaking down, in that the 'son/daughter of' construction was increasingly being used as an unchanging, inherited family name, producing such names as that used by a Bristol woman in 1429, Juliana ap Hywel, which is strictly speaking impossible. Like David ap Adam/Dudbroke and Thomas Mere/Yonge, Juliana also went by an English-sounding alias, in her case 'Orchard', and such practices mean that an unquantifiable number of the Bristol Welsh do not appear as such, a problem compounded by the fact that many of the Welsh were descended from English settlers, or from Welsh who had adopted an English name, and so never held a characteristically Welsh name.[552] These considerations mean that identifying the Bristol-Welsh through their names can only ever be a very rough and ready methodology, and we can but hope that the number of those who would have identified themselves as Welsh but who are missed because of their English names is roughly equal to those who, while bearing names that are recognised as being Welsh, would not have identified themselves as such.[553]

With these caveats in mind, it is nonetheless possible to state with a high degree of confidence that the Bristol-Welsh maintained their position in civic society throughout the long fifteenth century: between 1390 and 1525 high civic office (bailiff, sheriff or mayor) was held thirty-nine times by twenty-two men with Welsh names, or known to have Welsh origins, a figure that represents around ten per cent of the total number of office holders for the period. In an almost mirror image of Irish marginalisation, the last quarter of the fifteenth century Bristol saw something of a

---

[551] The use of the patronymic, ap/b, derived from mab, 'son of', and m/ferch, meaning 'daughter of', followed by the baptismal name of the father, as in David ap Adam, was widespread, and is found alongside Welsh toponyms, as well as nicknames or personal descriptions, such as b/fychan, "lesser", or "junior", anglicised to Vaghan, and c/goch, "red", anglicised to Cokkes or Gough. In addition, ap/b was increasingly being elided with the initial letter of the following name, to give characteristic Welsh names like Pugh (ap Hugh), Pryce (ap Ryce), and so on, while the practice was growing of using the father's baptismal name as a surname, without ap/b or m/ferch, but with the English possessive "s" as a suffix, thereby producing such common Welsh names as Jones, Griffiths, and Evans. Characteristic Welsh baptismal names, such as David (Dafydd), Howell (Hywel) and Griffith (Gruffudd) are also found. For the development, form and distribution of Welsh naming practices, see T. J. Morgan and Prys Morgan, *Welsh Surnames* (Cardiff: Wales UP, 1994); T. E. Morris, "Welsh Surnames in the Border Counties of Wales", *Y Cymmrodor*, 43 (1932), 93-173; D. Elwyn Williams, "A Short Enquiry into the Surnames in Glamorgan from the Thirteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries", *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1961-2), 45-87.

[552] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 143-4.

[553] The methodology is discussed further in Fleming, "Identity and Belonging", 187-9, 191-2. Examples of the use of personal names to identify the London-Welsh can be found in Emrys Jones, *The Welsh in London, 1500-2000* (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2001), 9-10, 37-40.

flowering of Welsh talent. This was apparent even before a Welshman took the throne of England in 1485. The most impressive example is provided by Henry Vaghan; he was described by Griffiths as early Tudor Bristol's "most successful and respected merchant", but Vaghan had been trading there since at least 1467, and two years later began his rise through the civic cursus honorum as bailiff, ending as mayor in 1483/4 and 1493/4, as wells as sitting for Bristol in the parliaments of 1487 and 1497. Identifying Henry's relatives is complicated by the fact that Vaghan was a common name, held by several different Welsh families, but at least one of the two John Vaghans, Bristol bailiffs in 1483/4 and 1498/9 respectively, or Thomas and William Vaghan, bailiffs in 1486/7 and 1515/6, and another John Vaghan, who died in 1491/2, were probably related to him. Bristol Vaghans had links with Cardigan, Aberystwyth, St David's and Cardiff, and are recorded in Bristol from at least 1405.[554] The Vaghans were joined in early Tudor Bristol's guildhall by ap Howells, Rhyses, Joneses, a Griffith, Williams, Edwards, ap Merick, and Davies, so that in the last twenty years of the century the Welsh presence among the civic elite was probably around twenty per cent. This figure matches the proportion of Welsh among the town's total population as calculated from the returns to the 1524/5 Tudor subsidy. Indeed, the Welsh continued to make up around twenty per cent of Bristol's population until at least the 1690s.[555] As such, they were by far the largest minority within the town's ethnic mix.

In the 1524/5 returns the Welsh can once again be tentatively identified by their names. Those with 'Welsh' names made up around twenty per cent of the total assessed population, and held around the same percentage of property by value. In terms of numbers and wealth the Welsh were most noticeable in the area immediately behind the quayside later known as Welsh Back, and there was a significant Welsh presence here well into the nineteenth century.[556] While there were some substantial property-owners with Welsh names, the returns also reveal by contrast a relatively large population of independent Welsh wage-earners in the St Thomas-Redcliffe-Temple suburb south of the Avon: as well as merchants and prosperous artisans, Bristol also attracted a sizeable Welsh 'proletariat'.[557]

To be meaningful, the assertion that twenty per cent of Bristol's population were Welsh does of course rest on the assumption that those individuals identified as Welsh thought of themselves as such. The evidence for this is naturally much more problematic. The progressive breakdown of the strict application of the patronymic naming system might be assumed to indicate the decline of the Welsh language among the Bristol-Welsh, but a similar process was at work in Wales itself, including areas where Welsh continued to be the first language.[558]

In a handful of cases it is possible to demonstrate a direct connection between the Bristol-Welsh and their putative homeland. Thus, in his will of 1407 the Bristol burgess Henry Culmer left bequests to his former parish church of the Holy Trinity, Caerleon and to the bridge at Caerleon, and mentioned his tenements there, while in 1471 Joan, the widow of John Packer of Chepstow, while evidently by now a Bristol resident, desiring burial and funding an obit at St James's Priory, nonetheless left a

554 Griffiths, "Medieval Severnside", 17-18.
555 Peter Fleming, "The Welsh Diaspora in Early Tudor English Towns", in *Urban Culture in Medieval Wales*, ed. Helen Fulton (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2012), 270-93, Table 12.1, at 277; Madge Dresser, "The Welsh in the Eighteenth Century", in Dresser and Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City*, 59-72, at 59.
556 Dresser, "The Welsh in the Eighteenth Century", 61-4.
557 Fleming, "The Welsh Diaspora", 286-9.
558 Fleming, "Identity and Belonging", 191-2.

number of bequests to churches and chapels in Chepstow, and established a perpetual chantry there, endowing it with her Chepstow property, as well as giving money to both Worcester (the cathedral for Bristol north of the Avon) and Llandaff cathedrals.[559] The following year Thomas Marys secured a pardon which described him as late of Bristol, mercer, alias late of Monmouth, gentleman, and in 1507 Richard Vaghan, merchant, asked to be buried in Bristol, but also provided for prayers to be said in the parish church of Aberystwyth, "wherin I was crystined".[560] In several wills testators mention Welsh property but with no indication of their place of birth; in such cases we cannot be sure whether they were Welsh immigrants or had bought or inherited the property.[561] In the case of Thomas Erle, an early fifteenth-century Bristol merchant and shipowner, his property in Swansea and Cardigan, associations with John Nichol, abbot of Neath, and with John Erle of Cardigan, very probably a relative, all point to him being of Welsh extraction.[562]

Such associations would help to maintain a continuing sense of "Welshness" among the *émigré* community living in Bristol, and there are instances of what appear to be Welsh networks linked to Welsh Bristolians. For example, the legatees of Edward Rede, who made his will in 1463, included Thomas David, alias "Madoc of Wales", Robert David, William and Edith Davy, and Rede's servant Hywel, and he was owed money by William Wodynton of Cardiff and William ap Thomas ap Preve.[563] In 1491 Richard Erle, probably son or grandson of Thomas, appointed as his executors William Jones, clerk, and Thomas Howell, and made bequests in his will to Hugh Jones and John Davy; all four had been enfeoffed by Erle a few months previously, and an earlier group of his feoffees included John Williams, John Kemys, Thomas ap Rys, John Haywardyn, John Davy, John Griffith, John ap Morgan and John ap Meryk.[564] Some Bristol-Welsh merchants may have banded together in trading ventures, as appears to have been the case with David and John Vaghan, William Aphowell and John Thomas, who shipped cargoes in Le Jhesus de Bristol in 1508.[565] However, these apparent Welsh networks were exceptional, and are greatly outnumbered by associations between the Bristol-Welsh and Bristol-English. This is an indication of how well the Welsh were integrated into Bristol's society, but of course such integration runs the risk of diluting cultural-ethnic identity.

The chapel of St Mark's Hospital may have had a particular Welsh connection. In 1470 and 1471 two members of the Welsh Mathewe family, Thomas and Reynborn, desired burial there; the latter described himself as an esquire of the Welsh March, and dated his will at the hospital. Neither made any other Bristol bequest other than those to St Mark's. In addition, the chapel contains the tomb of Miles Salley, an Englishman consecrated as bishop of Llandaff in 1500, who died at the hospital in 1516, and may have paid for the partial rebuilding of its chapel. St Mark's may have been a regular stop

[559] TNA PROB 11/2a/252, PROB 11/6/60.
[560] TNA C67/48, m. 2; PROB11/15/28.
[561] For example: Thomas Wellys, 1405, Caerleon (TNA PROB 11/2A/147); Alice Wylkyns, 1410, Newport (TNA PROB 11/2A/369); Thomas Aisshe, 1457 (TNA PROB 11/4/172); John Seynt, 1471, Newport (Wadley, Wills, 147-8); Thomas Jones, 1496, Monmouthshire (TNA PROB 11/11/5).
[562] BRO 26166/274, 276a-b, 325.
[563] Wadley, *Wills*, 126-7.
[564] TNA PROB 11/9/5; BRO 26166/282, 287-9, 290-1, 294, 305. John Kemys may have been a member of the Kemeys family of Glamorgan (R. B. Pugh (ed.), *The Marcher Lordships of South Wales, 1415-1536: Select Documents* (Wales UP, Cardiff, 1963), pp. 291-3); John Haywardyn may have taken his name from Hawarden, Flintshire.
[565] TNA KB9/453, no. 279.

on Salley's journeys between Oxfordshire, where he was active in county affairs and local government, and his see. St Marks may also have provided hospitality for Thomas and Reynborn Mathewe on their journeys to and from their Welsh homes.[566]

Fifteenth-century Bristol's English population appears to have been very much at ease with the Welsh. The Welsh towns with which Bristol had most contact, such as Chepstow, Newport, Cardiff and Tenby, were among the most Anglicised. As such, it is tempting to assume that Bristolians thought that there was practically no difference between the cultures of their town and of the urban inhabitants of South Wales, but a Chancery case brought in the 1530s suggests otherwise. The plaintiff, Thomas Jones of Bristol, brother and executor of William Jones of Newport, claimed that William had requested that his children be brought to Bristol, 'to the Intente to have hys chylderan browght upp according to the man[n]er & condiciones of the nurture of Inglonde'.[567] If we are to believe Thomas Jones, then Bristol and Newport were separated by more than just three miles of water.

Most fifteenth-century Bristolians had either migrated to the town from elsewhere in England, Wales or Ireland, or were the children or grandchildren of migrants. The broad elite of merchants and traders, and those sailors and carriers below them in the socio-economic hierarchy, travelled widely beyond the immediate hinterland. Within Britain, many had regular business in the West Midlands, the Welsh Marches and South Wales, and particularly London, while some had trading links with Ireland. A minority of Bristolians, of course, also experienced a far wider world. Some also travelled long distances to take up apprenticeships in Bristol, as may others who came to work as servants. Even those who did not travel regularly would have rubbed shoulders every day with visitors and migrants from many different parts of the realm. On the other hand, given the paucity of Bristolians' contacts with inhabitants of the north of Ireland or the far north of England, not to mention the Scots, who do not figure at all, they could have had little direct knowledge of these areas and their peoples. Indeed, it follows that for those Bristol merchants and mariners who regularly crossed the Bay of Biscay, Gascony or Andalucía would have been far more familiar than Ulster or Northumberland. The attitudes of the town's elite towards the ethnic minorities in their midst varied: while no bias towards or against the inhabitants of particular English regions has been detected, there was definitely growing hostility towards the Irish, whether these were Gaels or descendants of English or Welsh settlers, and this stands in stark contrast to the untroubled acceptance of the Welsh; indeed, an increasing proportion of the civic and commercial elite were themselves Welsh-born or of Welsh parentage.

Bristol was in many ways under London's shadow. Even over a distance of a hundred miles, it was still within the sphere of influence of the metropolis, and their economies were intermeshed. To Bristol, as to much of the rest of England and Wales, London was a source of finance, specialist and luxury goods, a market for produce or imports, a place where news could be exchanged and marriages made, and a place to which the enterprising or desperate went to seek their fortunes. However, Bristol also had these functions, but on a smaller scale and within a more restricted region: it was part of London's network, but in turn it was at the centre of its own, and this extended

[566] TNA PROB 11/5/461, PROB 11/6/10; Robert R. Dunning, "Miles Salley, bishop of Llandaff", *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, 8 (1991), pp. 1-6.
[567] TNA C1/831/60.

through much of the West Country, the West Midlands, South Wales and southern Ireland.[568]

[568] For a discussion of theories of urban hierarchies in a later medieval context, and particularly of hierarchies of urban networks, see Christopher Dyer, "Market Towns and the Countryside in Late Medieval England", *Canadian Journal of History/Annales canadiennes d'histoire*, 31 (1996), 17-35. Bristol succumbed to metropolitan domination in the sixteenth century, when the trends emerging in the 15th century, such as the penetration of Bristol's commercial sphere by Londoners, and the migration to London of members of Bristol's commercial elite, culminated in Bristol's virtual eclipse as an autonomous provincial economic power: Sacks, *Widening Gate*, 28-32.

Chapter Six: The Town and County

The last two chapters have discussed some of the ways in which fifteenth-century Bristolians regarded the world beyond Bristol. This chapter considers Bristol itself, in physical terms, by looking at its topography and how its inhabitants reacted to it, thereby creating for themselves a place from the physical spaces contained within the town.[569] However, before we can proceed to this, the apparently simple preliminary question of where Bristol began and ended must be asked. There is no correspondingly simple answer, because there were several sets of concentric boundaries which could be regarded as having delineated the town.

Defining Bristol

The outermost boundary of Bristol as an administrative unit is provided by the Bristol customs area. Bristol was a headport, and it was at the centre of a customs jurisdiction which covered an area extending as far west as Chespstow, south to the edge of the Bridgwater jurisdiction, apparently separated from the Bristol customs area between 1395 and 1402, and north to Gloucester.[570] However, its significance was confined to its existence as part of the national customs administration.

The next boundary was that of the county of Bristol. This was established and recorded in a charter in September 1373, following on from the grant of county status made the previous month.[571] The boundary was described in great detail, following the route taken by the commissioners appointed to establish the metes and bounds of the new county. The party appear to have walked along its length, describing their route with detailed reference to existing landmarks such as ditches, rivers, property boundaries and the like, and to marker stones, some of which were existing property markers set to establish field boundaries and the like, and some of which appear to have been newly placed in order to delineate the county boundary.

The perambulation began at Tower Haratz, which stood where the eastern end of the Portwall, the thirteenth-century extension of the town wall that ran along the southern edge of the Temple suburb, met the Avon: here also was the point where the easternmost extremity of the new county met the boundaries of Somerset and Gloucestershire. From here the perambulation followed the county boundary westwards, tracing its line just to the south of the Portwall, and encompassed St Mary Redcliffe. William Worcestre, writing 103 years later, noted the boundary stone at the west side of Redcliffe churchyard.[572] The boundary line then met the Avon again. From there the boundary followed the southern bank of the Avon up to its confluence with the Severn, and then carried on into the estuary, extending as far as the two islets of Flat Holm and Steep Holm, which now marked both the western extremity of the new

---

[569] The following section has been in part inspired by Chris Lewis, "Framing Medieval Chester: The Landscape of Urban Boundaries", in *Mapping the Medieval City*, ed. Clarke, 42-56, which suggests many points of comparison and contrast between Bristol and Chester.

[570] Carus-Wilson and Coleman, *England's Export Trade*, 178-9.

[571] *Bristol Charters, 1155-1373*, 142-65. The "Know Your Place" website provides a series of commonly scaled maps of the city, dating back to the Rocque Map of 1750: http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace/. The county boundary is clearly shown on the 1855 Ashmead Map.

[572] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 85.

county and another meeting with Somerset and Gloucestershire, before it returned eastwards along the north bank of the Avon. Thus, this first stretch of the county boundary encompassed the southernmost extent of Bristol's built-up area, within the curve of the Avon, carefully including Redcliffe, anciently contested with the Berkeleys, and covered the approach from the Bristol Channel, thereby giving Bristol jurisdiction over ships and their crews coming to and from the port.[573]

At the confluence of a rivulet called "Wodewilleslake" and the Avon the boundary turned north to follow a line that contained the conduit of St Augustine's Abbey and then ran along 'Wodewilleslane' (the modern Jacob's Wells Road), before turning east around the north of Brandon Hill. Here, Worcestre noted 'a standing stone of freestone, one yard or three feet in length, as a boundary point or mark, which is the furthest point of the liberties and franchise of the town of Bristol...right under the foot of St Brendan's Hill.'[574] This brought St Augustine's Abbey within the bounds of the new county, a move that created the potential for future tension, since the Abbey claimed its precinct and the adjacent green as a liberty over which it exercised private jurisdiction. The county boundary then diverted north-westwards, in a narrow tongue running either side of the royal highway now known as Saint Michael's Hill, as far as a spring and a stone cross, known as Bewell's Cross, located near the cross roads at the junction of the Henbury and Cotham roads. By 1480 the town gallows was placed here: its presence on this spot in 1373 would have explained the diversion, since pre-modern places of execution were often located on the very edge of the communities which owned them symbolising, probably, the expulsion of the malefactor from human society.[575] However, had the gallows existed at this time the boundary commissioners would surely have mentioned it as a significant landmark, so it is more likely that the boundary took this course in order to incorporate the spring at Bewell's Cross. The gallows, it seems, came later, its builders taking advantage of this extension of the boundary to place it on the very edge of the county, but at an elevated position that may still have been visible from the town. The county line then turned towards the south and east, incorporating the boundaries of various closes and fields. In 1480 a three-feet high standing stone marked the boundary north of Broadmead.[576] The boundary then descended from Kingsdown on the north bank of the river cliff of the Frome and Avon as far as the road to Stoke (modern Stoke's Croft), from where it headed east, passing beyond St James's Priory, where Worcestre noted another boundary marker, 'le meerestone', near the priory barns.[577] The line continued towards 'the conduit of the same town called Keypipeconduyt' and then another spring, at 'Beggereswelle' (Beggarwell, near modern Baptist Mills, and marked today by the street names Conduit Road and Conduit Place), both of which it contained. Worcestre noticed a tall standing stone and a square stone well head at Beggarwell.[578] The spring at "Beggereswelle" was brought into the county

[573] This would be of importance in Bristol's challenge to Admiralty jurisdiction: see below.
[574] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 54.
[575] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 140, notes in this location "...the tall stone appointed as the boundary of the franchise of the town of Bristol, near the cross and the site of the gallows for the legal punishment, by hanging and putting to death, for traitors and thieves...". For the Bristol gallows and pillory, see Peter Fleming, "Processing Power: Performance, Politics and Place in Early Tudor Bristol", in *Personalities and Perspectives of Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. A. Compton Reeves (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2012) 141-69, at 145-52.
[576] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 300.
[577] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 169-70.
[578] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 290.

within a tongue of land created by a diversion of the boundary similar to that which incorporated the spring at Bewell's Cross. The boundary then turned back south-westwards towards the Frome. Then it ran along the north bank of the Frome before crossing the river and meeting the "great ditch of the town", which defended the eastern end of Old Market. Here Worcestre noted another three-feet high stone marker outside Lawford's Gate, "seen and touched by me".[579] The boundary followed the ditch westwards, running parallel with Old Market, to the south of St Philip's church, until it met the castle ditch and then the Avon, before completing its circuit opposite Tower Haratz.

While the county boundary ran very close to the edge of the built-up area at the Portwall and at the eastern end of Old Market, for the rest of its course it contained a good deal of open land. The boundary tightly encompassed St Mary Redcliffe, but went no further south, the result, perhaps, of careful negotiation with Lord Berkeley. Elsewhere, the care with which the boundary accommodated various closes and fields may indicate that it was designed to contain as much of the land held by Bristolians in the immediate outskirts of their town as possible. In addition, the two extensions incorporating springs or conduits suggests that the boundary was intended to include as many of these features as possible, probably in an effort to secure the town's water supply.[580]

While the county boundary had obvious and very important constitutional and administrative significance, it does not seem to have loomed large in the consciousness of Bristolians in their daily lives. Royal clerks still usually referred to the "town" of Bristol, villa, rather than the county, comitatus, and Bristol testators tended to refer simply to "Bristol", without further definition, while at the same time being quite punctilious about locating other places beyond Bristol to within their respective counties. As distinct from the jealously guarded juridical and admininstrative privileges brought by county status, the county itself, as a territory, seems to have been eclipsed by the town as far as most were concerned.[581]

The one distinction Bristolians did make, fairly regularly, was between the town proper and its suburbs.[582] For fifteenth-century Bristolians, their town's suburbs began on the other side of the inner circuit of town walls. This meant that Bristol qua Bristol, the urbs, was comprised of an extremely small area, basically just the four streets that crossed in the central carfax and a few subsidiary streets and lanes within each quadrant. The areas between the original wall and the twelfth-century wall were deemed to be suburbs, as were those north of the Frome, east of the castle and south of

[579] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 179, 185.

[580] For the importance of conduits to later medieval Southampton, see Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 96, 144, 207.

[581] Indeed, in 1480 Worcestre could only speculate that the county's boundary ran as afar as Beggarwell, stating, in relation to Bagpath Mill, which stood close by, "to which spot, as some say, the liberties and franchises of the town of Bristol extend": *Topography*, no. 71.

[582] This section is influenced by Derek Keene, "Suburban Growth", in *The Plans and Topography of Medieval Towns in England and Wales*, ed. M. W. Barley (Council for British Archaeology Research Report 14, 1976), reprinted in *The English Medieval Town: A Reader in English Urban History, 1200-1540*, ed. Richard Holt and Gervase Rosser (London: Addison-Wesley Longman Ltd, 1990), 97-119. See also the comments in Nigel Baker and Richard Holt, *Urban Growth and the Medieval Church: Gloucester and Worcester* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 325-6, and Richard Britnell, *Colchester in the Early Fifteenth Century: A Portrait* (Durham: University of Durham, 1988), 19, 22.

the Avon.[583] This limited conception of "Bristol proper" was shared by Worcestre. At one point in his notes he measures the length and breadth of the town:

> THE LENGTH OF THE TOWN FROM NORTH TO SOUTH
> The length [of] the road starting at the foot of St John's bridge [recte gate]within Broad Street, and going on past the High Cross of High Street, going straight along High Street to St Nicholas's Gate: the said entire length measures, to the inner side of the said St Nicholas's Gate, eleven times 60,which makes 660 steps, which was the complete mid-line of the whole town to wit from the north side to the south.
> The length [of] the road from east to west, to wit from the place alongside the ancient gate of the town, this side of the new gate … measures ---- steps this side of Newgate; which road is the other mid-line of the whole complete road from east to west.[584]

His conception was also shared, it seems, by the artist who produced the view of the town in Ricart's Kalendar. In this, the four gates of the first town wall stand at each of the four corners of the picture, thereby excluding the twelfth-century mural circuit, let alone any settlement outside the walls. At the centre, and dominating the image, is an oversize depiction of the High Cross. The whole image might be seen as an attempt to portray, in a single bird's-eye-view panorama, the town as it would have appeared to an observer standing beneath the High Cross, at the central carfax, and turning to look down each of the four streets. As such, it portrays an image that could never have been seen from the ground, and which is quite clearly a stylized representation. The ruthless cropping, even to the extent of squeezing out the western and eastern walls, may have been the result of purely aesthetic considerations: this is a simple image that works well within a rectangular frame.

On the other hand, it was also intended to convey a strong symbolic charge. The image is designed around two crosses, portrayed in vertical and horizontal planes, which connect at the centre of the picture, which is also the centre of town. The first is the High Cross, the second the simplified street system, where Broad Street, Corn Street, High Street and Wind Street form a saltire. This was probably intended to be read as an expression of the Christian nature of the place: Bristol was a holy city.[585] While it would be going too far to suggest that the artist was familiar with a Latin text composed in twelfth-century Chester, the correspondence between this image of Bristol, conveyed as a visual representation, and that of Chester found in the De laude Cestrie, an encomium to the city by the monk Lucian, is striking.[586] Lucian draws a very similar parallel between the cruciform street system of Chester and the Christian cross:

> Chester also has two perfectly straight streets intersecting like the blessed cross, which form four roads, culminating at the four gates, mystically revealing that the grace of the Great King dwells in the very city…[587]

---

[583] For example, see the wills of Thomas Gloucester, 1407, where Bristol Bridge, as well as Baldwin Street and Marsh Street, both between the first and second walls, are described as suburban (TNA PROB 11/2A/238), and William Bowman, 1455, for whom Marsh Street is also suburban, as are Horse Street and Steep Street, on the north bank of the Frome: TNA PROB 11/4/25.

[584] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 344-5.

[585] As such, it is doubtful if this image can be regarded as a "map", in the sense of a visual representation of a place that is intended to aid its navigation, although it amply fulfils the ideological and polemical criteria which can also help to define maps: see Catherine Delano-Smith & Roger J. P. Kain, *English Maps: A History* (London: British Library,1999), 1-2.

[586] Fleming, "Processing Power", 160.

[587] Catherine A. M. Clarke, "Introduction. Medieval Chester: Views from the Walls', in eadem, *Mapping the Medieval City*, 1-18, at 7; Keith D. Lilley, "Urban Mappings: Visualizing Late Medieval Chester in

Bristol, like Chester, may in some way have been inhabited by the corpus Christi, but it seems that only that minority of its inhabitants who lived within the original circuit of walls could actually regard themselves as citizens of this holy city.[588] Hence, it can be said that most fifteenth-century Bristolians did not live in "Bristol", insofar as they did not live in this central area. This conception of the town probably stretched back a long way, since it was the inner town wall that defined urbs and suburbs, and this had not been a meaningful defensive or, presumably, administrative, feature since the building of the new circuit in the thirteenth century; it is striking that the new wall did not cause a re-evaluation of what was and what was not truly "Bristol".[589] This notion of an original, or core, Bristol bounded by its almost circular town wall was evidently fundamental to how its inhabitants defined themselves: the wall enclosed, possibly even created, a space that was at once both sovereign and sacred. The location of the image of the town in the Kalendar, immediately after the description of Bristol's foundation by Brennius, who "set it vpon a litell hill, that is to say, bitwene Seint Nicholas yate, Seint Johnes yate, Seint Leonardes yate, and Newe yate", may have been intended to suggest that what was being depicted was in some way the atemporal essence of the place, that since its foundation the town walls had bounded a sacred, and autonomous, community, a Holy City on a Hill.[590] The glaring anachronism of a Christian foundation made

---

Cartographic and Textual Form", in ibid., 19-41, at 34-5. The text was edited by M. V. Taylor, *Liber Luciani: De laude Cestrie*, Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, 64 (1912), but a new edition by Mark Faulkner, is now available: http://www.medievalchester.ac.uk/texts/reading/Lucian.html

[588] The artist may have been local, or at least may have produced this image in Bristol: the crypt tomb recess of Bishop John Carpenter of Worcester (d. 1476) in Westbury-on-Trym church once contained mural paintings depicting his funeral procession from Worcester to Westbury; while these have vanished, we do have copies of them made in 1852, and the stylistic resemblance to the view of Bristol in Ricart's Kalendar does suggest that the same artist may have been responsible for both: Nicholas Orme & Jon Cannon, *Westbury-on-Trym: Monastery, Minster and College*, BRS, 62 (2010), 162-4, plate x. If so, then his depiction of Bristol would have been informed by contemporary ideas about its topographical symbolism.

[589] The process by which the first wall would be almost entirely obliterated had already begun, with its towers being used as houses, churches built over three of its gates, and the fourth, Newgate, being used first as a school and then as a prison: Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 33-8. In addition, the wall was pierced by numerous gateways for which the mayor and common council gave permission and collected rent: *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 114-5, *Part 4*, 23-8. The inner wall is totally absent from Millerd's map of 1673. On the other hand, the 15th-century town continued to benefit from grants of murage (e.g. *CPR*, *1413-1416*, 171, *1442-1446*, 416), suggesting that the wall was still valued: it was probably the 13th-century, outer wall that was being maintained, and for reasons of civic pride as much as military protection. The latter is likely if Bristol's attitudes to its wall are similar to those of Coventry, which took many years to build its town wall, which was in fact never completed, so that it was never convincing as a purely defensive structure: Chris Patrick, "Recent Archaeological Work in Medieval Coventry and Future Possibilities", in *Coventry*, ed. Monckton and Morris, 21-32, at 26-7; Iain Soden, "An Introduction to the Archaeology of Medieval Coventry", in ibid., 1-20, at 13-14; idem, *Coventry: The Hidden History* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), 225-39. On the other hand, the town walls of Southampton, vulnerable to French attack, retained their overwhelmingly defensive value: Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 171-5. The inadequacy of later medieval Bristol's walls as defensive structures, as opposed to their symbolic, regulatory or fiscal significance, was a common feature of English town walls: John Schofield and Geoffrey Stell, "The Built Environment, 1300-1540', in *CUHB*, 371-93, at 372-4.

[590] For the idea of urban walls as defining a sacred and sovereign space see Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 43-7. For Bristol's autonomy, but not, strictly speaking "sovereignty", of course, relative to the Crown and other outside authority, see below, 00-00. According to Meredith Cohen, "Metropolitan Architecture, Demographics, and the Urban Identity of Paris in the Thirteenth Century", in *Cities, Texts and Social Networks, 400-1500: Experiences and Perceptions of Urban Space*, ed. Caroline Goodson, Anne E. Lester & Carol Symes (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 65-100, at 68-74, Philip Augustus's building of a new wall around Paris created a new definition of the city. The

centuries before the Incarnation was an inevitable product of this conception, but it would probably have bothered fifteenth-century contemporaries far less than it does their modern descendants.

In excluding most of the town's built-up area, the essential, intra-mural Bristol also excluded areas which posed challenges – past and/or potential - to the authority of the mayor and common council, such as the castle, held by the Crown since the twelfth century, and the settlements on the north bank of the Frome, which were dominated by religious houses, and particularly by St Augustine's and its claimed liberty between the river and Brandon Hill.[591] In addition, it excluded Redcliffe and Temple, the areas south of the Avon that had once been entirely independent of Bristol proper.[592] Redcliffe was part of the Berkeley manor of Bedminster, and relations between the Berkeleys and Bristol had not always been cordial.[593] Temple was held by the Knights of St John, to whom it had been granted after the suppression of the Templars in the early fourteenth century. While the 1373 Charter had definitively subsumed this ultra-pontine area under Bristol's jurisdiction, there persisted a feeling that this was not entirely part of the town. This was made explicit by a dispute that arose in 1543-4 over the Candlemass Fair. The fair had been instituted in 1529 by the mayor and common council, to be held every February in the parish of Redcliffe, as a way of easing the poverty of the inhabitants of Bristol south of the Avon, but by the 1530s its success was felt to be a threat to the fairs and markets north of the river, and the mayor and common council brought a successful suit before Star Chamber in which they called for its suppression. The language used in this suit presents Redcliffe as separate from Bristol.[594]

In the Footsteps of William Worcestre

Worcestre's notes provide us with a uniquely detailed picture of the topography of a later medieval English town, but they are not without their problems.[595] Quite apart from his frustrating privileging of measurement over descriptions of function or appearance (and he was certainly not an economic or social historian, so many of the issues addressed in the previous two chapters do not seem to have struck him as important), his notes were made on a series of loose sheets of paper which have been bound in no discernable order, and on occasion he seems to have used empty spaces to make notes out of sequence. Hence, no attempt has been made to reconstruct any of his walking routes. Instead, this section will use his notes, supplemented by other evidence

---

familiar medieval acceptance of, or refusal to recognise, "anachronism", suggested here as a possible context for reading of this image, can usefully be compared to the discussion in Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), particularly 7-34, 45-62.

[591] Sacks, Trade, *Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 245-6.

[592] David Walker, *Bristol in the Early Middle Ages*, BHA, 28 (1971), 20-3.

[593] Bridget Wells-Furby, *The Berkeley Estate, 1281-1417: Its Economy and Development* (Bristol: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2012), 6 n.

[594] *GWBB*, 4-5, 120-1; *Select Cases in the Star Chamber*, ed. I. S. Leadam, *Selden Society,* 2 (1910), cxviii-cxxix, 237-76; TNA E 163/12/2; Sacks, *Widening Gate*, 153.

[595] While Worcestre's Bristol notes are uniquely detailed, subsequent development has not been kind to the city's medieval topography: an indication of what can be known of the medieval built environment of a town that has experienced far less subsequent change is provided in Helen Clarke, Sarah Pearson, Mavis Mate and Keith Parfitt, *Sandwich: The "Completest Medieval Town in England"* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), 214-27. An overview of medieval urban topography is provided by Schofield and Stell, "Built Environment".

where appropriate, to present a possible tour of the town as Worcestre would have seen it in 1480.

Setting out from the house of his sister, Joan Jay, on St Thomas Street, Worcestre would immediately have been aware of the parish church, but while he measured St Thomas's church several times, and made use of the chronicle kept there, he had little else to say of it.[596] However, he did note the pentice along the western side of St Thomas Street, around the corner from the church (a feature also shown on Millerd's map), but without telling us its function.[597] He also noted on St Thomas Street 'a square house of freestone for water for the people of that parish and living in the area'.[598] Walking along St Thomas Lane to the south of the church, past the public latrine, would have brought Worcestre to Redcliffe Street.[599] A variety of industries were located here, including dyeing (traces of madder and woad have been found in the vicinity), weaving, shoemaking, tanning, baking (an igloo-shaped stone building uncovered by archaeologists may have been a bread oven), metalworking (among other finds in this area were features that may have been either moulds for bell-casting or dye vats), and painting (other finds from this area include blue and red pigments, from copper ore and lead, respectively, and oyster shells, perhaps used as palettes).[600] At the same time, this industrial area had also been home to the most wealthy Bristolian of the fifteenth century, in the person of William Canynges, who had died six years before Worcestre's 1480 perambulations. His house stood at the southern end of Redcliffe Street, on the west side. Worcestre was obviously very impressed by the structure, which he described as pulcherima. The house fronted Redcliffe Street, where the stone arcade that once ran along the side of the hall survived its demolition in 1937, and the property extended to Redcliffe back and the quayside, where a large stone tower overlooked the water. Two courtyards separated the house from the tower, and the former had a magnificent wooden roof and a luxurious tiled floor. Worcestre describes the house as being highly decorated, with four bay windows, and Millerd's illustration depicts it as a four-storey building. Stepped slipways at the house's private quay allowed ships to be loaded and unloaded at different tides. Canynges valued living close to the river, despite this low-lying area being less than entirely salubrious: archaeologists have discovered rat bones and large numbers of fly pupae on this site.[601]

A few metres to the south stood Redcliffe Gate, one of the two gates piercing the thirteenth-century Portwall. The structure contained double gates, and adjoining it was a small water conduit and watering place.[602] The portwall, with its numerous towers, two strong gatehouses and ditch was obviously an imposing structure, but its most regular function was not at all military. Like the wall walks of Exeter and Chester

---

[596] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 294, 364; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 43.
[597] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 89.
[598] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 59.
[599] The latrine was not mentioned by Worcestre, but in John Burton's will of 1454 he referred to the tenement in St Thomas Lane opposite the southern entrance to St Thomas's church extending to a path where one goes ad Latrinas, situated on the Law Ditch: Wadley, *Wills*, 136.
[600] Peter Fleming and Kieran Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol: Life in the Medieval and Tudor Town* (Tiverton: Redcliffe Press, 1998), 79, 81-2. The industrial nature of this area accords with the picture presented by the returns to the 1524 lay subsidy, which indicated a relatively high number of "proletariat" living here..
[601] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 390; Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 79, 81. For the appearance of private stone quaysides in later medieval England, see Schofield and Stell, "Built Environment", 375.
[602] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 165, 389, 426.

(check), the wall was used for recreation: Worcestre noted that the "Thickness of the wall-walk upon which people stroll [quam homines ambulant] [was] 2 yards"; he estimated the total width at eight feet.[603]

Once through the gate Worcestre would have been faced by St Mary Redcliffe, still magnificent even after losing the top of its spire in a storm thirty-five years earlier. This was not the only significant feature south of the wall, however, and Worcestre noted the hospital of St John immediately below the church, with a square water cistern in its cloister and a hermitage adjoining it to the west.[604] On the far side of Redcliffe Hill were two other hospitals, St Mary Magdalene's, for lepers (leper-hospitals were normally sited just outside town walls), and St Katherine's, where Worcestre noted that "Master Henry Abingdon, musician of the Chapel Royal, is master".[605] He also described the chapel of the Holy Spirit, in the grounds of St Mary Redcliffe, and the house built for the four 'Canynges priests' who served his chantry foundations within the church. St Mary's itself fascinated Worcestre, and he first attempted to describe it in 1478 before returning to it in 1480.[606]

Turning east along the Portwall would have brought Worcestre to Temple Gate, with its square tower and gardens, and the Augustinian Friary, both of which he measured.[607] Just inside the gate and opposite the friary was Spicer's almshouse, probably founded by Mayor John Spicer in 1352, and rebuilt in the later fifteenth century.[608] Further along Temple Street was the weavers' guildhall, a two-storeyed structure, with the hall itself on the first floor and an almshouse beneath; built at the end of the thirteenth century, this was Bristol's oldest purpose-built guild hall. Glass depicting the weavers' patron saint, Katherine, with her wheel, and a priest praying to her for intercession, survived at the guild chapel until its destruction in 1940.[609] Another victim of the Blitz is the church of the Holy Cross, or Temple church, adjoining the Weavers' Hall. Now just a shell, this once magnificent structure replaced the original circular church of the Templars: after their suppression in the early fourteenth century the parish and liberty of the Temple was transferred to the Knights of St John, who rebuilt the church. The upper stage of the tower was added around 1460, built at a different angle to the lower stages, indicating that by this time the tower was already leaning because of inadequate foundations. Even so, despite the passage of years and the bomb damage, the tower is still standing.[610] At the northern end of Temple Street, where it joined Counterslip and Tucker Street, was the Stallage Cross and a pillory: both denoted the liberty of Temple Fee, enjoyed first by the Templars and then by the

---

[603] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 151; Mark Stoyle, *Circled with Stone: Exeter's City Walls, 1485-1660* (Exeter: Exeter UP, 2003); Clarke, "Introduction. Medieval Chester: Views from the Walls", 1-9.

[604] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 427, 429; Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 79.

[605] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 159-61,166, 400, 470; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 49-50; Clive Burgess and Andrew Wathey, "Mapping the Soundscape: Church Music in English Towns, 1450-1550", *Early Music History*, 19 (2000), 1-46, at 43-4.

[606] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 85, 113, 263, 383. Worcestre's notes on St Mary are discussed in detail in Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 43-6.

[607] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 23-6, 149-51, 283-4, 294, 389; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 48.

[608] Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 82; Bruce Williams, "The Excavation of Medieval and Post-Medieval Tenements at 94-102 Temple Street, Bristol, 1975", *TBGAS*, 106 (1988), 107-68, at 107-8, 122-4. This building was not noted by Worcestre.

[609] Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 18, 82. Nor was this noticed by Worcestre.

[610] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 148, 259, 309; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 43; Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 82-3.

Knights of St John until the 1530s when it was contested by the mayor and common council and then supressed by Henry VIII.[611]

Turning left at this point would have taken Worcestre into Tucker Street, named after the local word for fuller and hence a reminder of the industrial nature of the southern suburb. Millerd's map shows the area between Temple Street and the Avon as largely given over to tenter racks for stretching cloth, and a rope-house, but if these existed in 1480 Worcestre did not record them.[612] On the other hand, he did note the "great well" and the stairway, or slip, leading down to the Avon, both near the junction of Tucker Street and the Counterslip, to which the latter feature probably gave its name.[613]

Worcestre was fascinated by Bristol Bridge, which he believed to have been founded by King John in1215.[614] The bridge was lined with houses and cellars: Worcestre estimated that the buildings were thirty feet wide on each side, with a fifteen-feet wide roadway between them. The houses jettied beyond the bridge itself, and were supported on buttresses. This feature, as well as allowing for spacious accommodation, also facilitated the disposal of refuse. Probably for this reason there was also a public latrine, the "Avon Privy", on the bridge.[615] The structure needed regular maintenance: in 1435 the mayor and commonalty were allowed to acquire in mortmain property to the annual value of £100 from which to finance their repairs to the quays, walls and pavements, and especially the Bridge, "which is liable to damage as well from the swift set of the tide under it as by the constant traffic of sumpter horses, carts and other carriages over it".[616] Worcestre was particularly impressed by the chapel of the Assumption which stood across the centre of the bridge, describing it as, "[t]he very beautiful chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, with a wide and lofty crypt arched with stone beneath the chapel, over the middle area of Bristol Bridge, and very strongly arched over the bridge, with huge buttresses".[617] According to Worcestre the stone-built complex comprised a ground-floor crypt with a chapel, hall with offices, an upper room, and a topmost room located in the three storeys above. Worcestre describes the crypt as being used by the aldermen, councillors and civic officers for meetings: presumably they met in one of two rooms either side of the central gatehouse, which had two sets of gates. When these were closed the bridge was sealed off, and hence so was the southern approach to Bristol north of the Avon. A square bell-tower stood above the chapel.[618]

The northern bridgehead lead to a triangular space in front of the church and gate of St Nicholas, one of the four major entries into the old town. At this end of the bridge was a midden, and, rather more salubriously, in the middle of the open space stood a stone conduit house.[619] St Nicholas church used the fifteen-feet thick town wall

---

[611] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 22, 145, 147, and see below, 00-00.
[612] Kirsten Egging Dinwiddy with John Chandler, "Temple Back: Excavating Bristol's Industrial History", *TBGAS*, 129 (2011), 79-116.
[613] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 22, 145; Richard Coates and Jennifer Scherr, "Some Local Place-Names in Medieval and Early-Modern Bristol", *TBGAS*, 129 (2011), 155-196.
[614] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 472.
[615] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 1-2, 118, 182-3, 388.
[616] CPR, 1431-1435, 497.
[617] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 261; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 50-1; Bettey, *Medieval Friaries, Hospitals and Chapelries*, 34-5.
[618] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 182, 247, 287.
[619] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 123, 180-1.

as its southern wall, and was long and narrow, with a nave less than fifteen feet wide, and with its chancel built above the gateway. As well as the difference in level between nave and chancel, the building spanned the considerable drop either side of the town wall, so that its crypt was accessible through a door in its southern elevation facing the Avon, but extended underneath St Nicholas Street to the north of the town wall. Adjoining the western end of the church was a flight of steps piercing the town wall and connecting the two street levels. The church tower with its spire housed a set of bells and the town clock, and each night at nine o'clock the curfew was rung from here, announcing the imminent closure of the town gates. Although Worcestre does not mention it, by 1524 at least the church provided another form of public amenity, in the shape of "the pissing place with-oute the churche Durre".[620]

Passing through St Nicholas Gate would have brought Worcestre into High Street, and hence into the old town centre. The street was lined with houses, some with their cellars accessible by stairs leading down from street level.[621] We have a good impression of one house, on the west side of High Street, just north of the St Nicholas Street junction, through the building contract drawn up between its owner, Agnes Chestre, and the housebuilder, Stephen Morgan, carpenter, in 1472. The house was to be 19 feet 5 inches long and 10 feet 4 inches wide, with a ground-floor shop, and on the next two floors a hall and chamber, both with oriel windows, and a further chamber on the topmost floor. The four-storey structure survived until at least the early nineteenth century, when it was depicted in two water colours.[622] High Street probably had a greater than average concentration of inns, since this was the first part of the old town encountered by travellers from Somerset.[623]

The north end of High Street led to a carfax, and a little way back from the angle it formed with Corn Street stood All Saints' church, while at the junctions of Broad Street with Corn and Wine streets stood the churches of St Ewen and Christ Church, otherwise known as Holy Trinity. The High Cross stood in the centre of this cross-roads. Built on both sides of the corner of St Ewen's church facing the cross was a one-storey pentice, with offices behind and above. These structures were described by Worcestre in two relatively extended passages as:

> The place over against the Tolsey, where the mayor and councillors of the town meet from day to day, when it seems needful, beneath the cover of a flat lead roof, fronting the west door of Christ Church, measures 5 yards; and on the other side fronting High Street it measures --- yards.
> THE HALL OF THE COUNCILLORS [DOMUS CONCILIARIJ] FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TOWN, NEAR THE HIGH CROSS

---

620 Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 15, 41-2, 57, 138, 180, 357, 359; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 38, 41-2; Joseph Bettey, "The Pre-Reformation Records of St Nicholas, Bristol", in *Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol*, ed. Bettey, 55-72, at 56-8.

621 *GRBB*, *Text, Part IV*, 99-100 refers to Alice Bird's wine cellar under High Street. At least one medieval double cellar still exists under High Street, but is not open to the public. Worcestre counted 19 arched vaults and 12 cellars under High Street: *Topography*, no. 62.

622 These can be seen at the "Know Your Place" website (http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace/?maptype=js, accessed 20/12/12) and the O'Neill picture and contract are reproduced in Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 37-8. The contract is BRO P.AS/D/HS/C/9; see also Leech, *The Topography of Medieval and Early Modern Bristol, Part I: Property Holdings in the Early Walled Town and Marsh Suburb North of the Avon*, BRS, 48 (1997), 78. Medieval Bristol's houses and their interiors are not dealt with in detail here, since they are to be the subject of a major study by Professor Leech.

623 Leech, *Topography*, 73 (nos. 3-4), 75 (nos. 11-13), 76 (nos. 18-20), 78 (nos. 30, 32-4), 79 (nos. 35-6, 37-8).

> The meeting-hall [Officium Domus conciliarij] of the councillors, as well of the mayor, sheriff and bailiffs of the town and their chief councillors, and of the chief merchants when it shall be needful is situated next to the Tolsey Court. It is right next to the open meeting-place over against the Tolsey, opposite the chancel of All Saints' church, with rooms above, most worthily furnished for the ruling councillors of the said town, attached onto the south side of St Ewen's church.[624]

Thus, the Tolzey Court was held in the open-sided pentice that faced both Broad Street and Corn Street, while between this and St Ewen's was a ground-floor hall with rooms above, although how the hall would have been lit is not clear.[625] The Tolzey itself is shown by Millerd, and while it had been partially rebuilt by then it is still readily identifiable as the same structure described by Worcestre.[626] By 1532, at least, the Tolzey was provided with heavy curtains to keep out the worst of the weather, but even with these its position would still have been exposed: even so, the court does seem to have been open to the street.[627] Worcestre indicates that the Tolzey not only faced onto the southern end of Broad Street, but also onto High Street: in other words, it protruded some way into the carfax, and as such gave views down all four of the major thoroughfares of the old town. This "panopticon" effect could also be found in the Chester Pentice, a similar structure in a similar position relative to its city-centre carfax, and so is unlikely to have been accidental: in fact, the Chester version may have been inspired by Bristol's Tolzey.[628] The mayor's justice could not only be seen to be done, but he could also keep an eye on what was happening around him.[629] The council meeting hall described by Worcestre was adapted from a house that had come into the possession of the mayor and common council at some point shortly before 1459: a Tolzey house had existed close to, but not adjoining, the church since before 1356, so it looks as though the house acquired before 1459 abutted the south aisle, and was used to extend this older Tolzey house to occupy the entire plot that ran from the east end of the chapel of St John the Baptist, facing Corn Street, to the east end of St Ewen's giving on to Broad Street.[630]

Continuing into Broad Street brought Worcestre to the Guildhall, measured by him and described as "the public courthouse [*domus officij justitie*]", but meriting no further comment.[631] This is where the mayor sat for sessions of the peace; it was also where the annual mayor-making took place. Next to it was St George's Chapel, described by Worcestre as:

> A spacious chapel in honour of St George, founded by Richard Spicer, famous merchant and burgess of the said town, about the time of King Edward III or King Richard II; and

[624] Worcestre, *Topography,* nos. 30-31.
[625] Leech, *Topography*, map 4 and p. 59.
[626] The Tolzey was rebuilt and extended in or soon after 1551: *The Church Book of St. Ewen's, Bristol, 1454-1584,* ed. B. R. Masters and Elizabeth Ralph BGAS, 6 (1967), xiv.
[627] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 52, records the provision of new timber partitions and painted hanging cloths in 1532.
[628] Chester's Pentice was completed in 1498: David Mills, "The Chester Mystery Plays: Truth and Tradition", in *Courts, Counties and the Capital in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Diana E. S. Dunn (Stroud: Sutton, 1996), 1-26, at 20 .
[629] Fleming, 'Processing power', 151-2.
[630] *Church Book of St Ewen's*, ed. Masters and Ralph, 256-8, xiv, xxii-xxiii.
[631] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 333.

> there is a most worthy fraternity of merchants and seafarers of Bristol attached to the said chapel.[632]

At the end of Broad Street were the adjoining churches of St Lawrence and Saint John the Baptist, sharing a spire and built either side of St John's Gate, marking the northern extent of the old town. Worcestre measured both churches, but was more interested in the gate and St John's crypt, which like that of St Nicholas had windows and a door at street level outside the town wall and was subterranean inside.[633] The two Broad Street churches also shared with St Nicholas the restricted dimensions of a wall-church, being less than thirty feet wide but almost ninety feet long. The restrictions of the site meant that the chapel of St John the Baptist, effectively the guild chapel of the Tailors' craft, was located at the other end of Broad Street, at St Ewen's, while the Tailors' guild hall and St John's small churchyard were both located in Taylor's Court, an alley running off Broad Street opposite the Guildhall.[634] On the southern side of St John's church, next to the gate, was a one-storey stone conduit house, "for drawing water through pipes of lead...".[635]

On the other side of St John's Gate, at the end of Christmas or Knifesmith Street, Worcestre would have seen the Frome Bridge. Each end of the bridge was guarded by gatehouses, each with two towers either side. Houses and a school were built into these towers. The southern gatehouse was part of the northern extension of the town wall of the 1240s. At this end Worcestre noted a slip of about forty steps down to the river under an arch surmounted by a freestone cross, which presumably provided a doorway through the town wall.[636] As he crossed the bridge Worcestre would have seen, to his left, the big sea-going sailing ships tied up at the Key; on his right was St James Back, with piles of timber, firewood and other supplies unloaded from boats small enough to ply between the piers of the bridge.[637] Directly ahead of him was St Bartholomew's Hospital and a little to his right the Franciscan Friary.

Immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the St Bartholomew's property was Steep Street, now Christmas Steps. Climbing Steep Street (with difficulty: it was not stepped until the seventeenth century, and must have been hazardous in wet weather), and reaching St Michael's Hill, Worcestre would have seen the church of St Michael and opposite it the nunnery of St Mary Magdalene. Missing from Steep Street when Worcestre visited was the almshouse of John Foster, its chapel not founded until 1504; it would be dedicated to the Three Kings of Cologne, a highly unusual dedication for an English religious house.[638] Beyond giving their measurements Worcestre had little to say about either St Michael's or the nunnery, other than to note that there were only 'three poor nuns' in charge of the latter.[639] At the junction of the road from the

---

[632] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 384.

[633] Worcestre commented upon the greater height of the old town above the Key, estimating that the difference in elevation was about ten feet: *Topography*, no. 102.

[634] For St John's Chapel, see Church Book of St Ewen's, ed. Masters and Ralph, xiv, xx. Taylor's Court preserves the dimensions of a typical medieval burgage plot: a long courtyard behind a narrow street frontage, thereby making the most of the expensive prime land facing the street; in this instance the plot stretches back to the line of the old town wall.

[635] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 194, 305. Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 33-6; Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 72.

[636] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 109, 393; Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 67.

[637] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 302, 304. Some of this timber probably came from the Forest of Dean.

[638] Bettey, *Medieval Friaries, Hospitals and Chapelries*, 33.

[639] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 139, 330, 409-10.

Franciscan friary to Steep Street, close by St Michael's, Worcestre noted a tall stone cross and a well, walled with freestone; a little further north, at the summit of St Michael's Hill on Kingsdown, and on the edge of the county boundary, was the well next to Bewell's Cross.[640] Near here Worcestre claimed had been 'the jousting-place of olden days [le justyng place ab antiquis diebus].[641] Standing on the ridge of Kingsdown Worcestre could have looked down on the centre of Bristol and the southern suburb beyond the Avon, while northwards lay the open fields of Redland and, beyond them, the Downs and Avon Gorge.

At the St Michael's crossroads, Frog Lane led westwards down to the area around St Augustine's Abbey and St Mark's Hospital.[642] The abbey was the first of a series of religious houses which, with their associated estates, spread almost without interruption along the north-west bank of the Frome all the way to St James's Priory. While there was some house building along Steep Street, Frog Lane and around the Abbey Green, this band of ecclesiastical estates, completed by the mid-thirteenth century, effectively prevented large-scale settlement beyond the Frome west of Broadmead, so that any further suburban growth had to occur on land reclaimed from the marsh between the two rivers and in the area south of the Avon. Hence, it was these areas that were encompassed by new town walls.

The abbey precinct was marked out by wooden stumps along the Abbey Green side, facing the town.[643] Worcestre supplies its other limits: another southern boundary to the precinct was provided by the parish church of St Augustine's the Less, whose rebuilding had only finished in 1480; to the west the precinct ran to the point where the ground dropped away to the marsh by the Avon; its northern edge was bounded by Brandon Hill; St Mark's Hospital abutted to the east. Worcestre measured the Abbey's Norman nave, then still in use before its eventual demolition as part of the abbey's rebuilding programme, as well as noting the gateway and other ancillary buildings.[644] He also measured St Mark's chapel, and noted its orchard and large walled garden.[645] For some reason, he did not record St Jordan's Chapel on the Green, but he was clearly intrigued by Brandon Hill, or St Brendon's Hill, and the hermitage at its summit. According to the resident hermit the chapel was "known by sailors and knowledgeable men" to have been higher than St Mary Redcliffe or any other Bristol church, by over a hundred feet, strongly suggesting that it - and perhaps the tower of St Mary's also - was used as a navigational aid by mariners coming up the Avon. Worcestre also recorded how "... it is said, the said hill is similar to the hill of Calvary near Jerusalem".[646] The supposed similarity between the holiest site in Christendom and the burial place of Bristol's local saint would presumably have strengthened the Abbey precinct's sacred associations.

The road back towards Bristol would have taken Worcestre along the north bank of the Frome. With the impressive prospect of the ships tied up at the Key on the south bank of the river to his right, Worcestre would have seen to his left scattered houses and

---

[640] Worcestre, *Topography,* nos 35, 76-7, 192-3, 328-9; and see above, 00-00, for Bewell's Cross.
[641] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 192.
[642] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 35.
[643] *GWBB*, 53-66, for topographical details recorded in this area during the course of the 1496 dispute over the Abbey Green.
[644] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 53-4, 75, 327, 464; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 42, 46-7.
[645] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 35, 53, 75-6, 328, 348; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 48.
[646] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 325, 323, 403.

a good deal of land given over to gardens and orchards below the largely unsettled hills to the north. The contrast between this rather pastoral scene on one side of the Frome and the hurley-burley of one of England's biggest towns on the other must have been stark. The most impressive sight along this stretch of the northern bank was undoubtedly the Carmelite Friary. This was the most substantial of the Bristol friaries, and it was a noted centre for the order, associated with a number of leading Carmelite intellectuals. The house itself stood a little above the river bank, and its lands extended up the side of the river cliff as far as two guest houses at its summit. According to Worcestre, its church was around 150 feet long and nearly 50 feet wide, with a 200 feet-high spire. Like their fellows at Greyfriars, the White Friars lived amid considerable architectural splendour, and they too benefitted from the supply of fresh water, supplied from a spring on Brandon Hill.[647]

Walking through the Carmelites' estate would have brought Worcestre back to the bottom of Steep Street. Immediately adjacent to the east side of the street was St Bartholomew's Hospital, and beyond that was the Franciscan friary, or Greyfriars. St Bartholomew's had been founded by the de la Warre family soon after the land around the Frome was reclaimed in the 1240s. In 1445 the hospital was refounded to accommodate the Fraternity of St Clement, charged with supporting twelve poor sailors. By this time the hospital was relatively poor, and its buildings, including a chapel, hall and kitchen, were not in good repair.[648] The Franciscan friary was founded about the same time as St Bartholomew's, and was rebuilt in the 1380s. Here, Worcestre would have seen a substantial church, over 160 feet long, with two aisles and a bell tower, a cloister, hall, kitchen and other domestic rooms standing in the midst of extensive grounds that included dovecotes, gardens, orchards, fishponds and limekilns. There was also a large cemetery that attracted burials from beyond the friary itself. The grounds extended up the hill, at the top of which was another building, possibly a guest house. There was probably also a school. The friars had a supply of spring water piped from Kingsdown. In contrast to St Bartholomew's, this was a prosperous, well-supported community.[649] Opposite the friary, by the river in Lewinsmead, stood an almshouse founded around 1478 by William Spencer, as an executor of William Canynges in fulfilment of one of the provisions of his will.[650]

The eastern edge of the friary lands shared a boundary with those of the priory of St James.[651] This early twelfth-century foundation was a daughter house of the Benedictine abbey at Tewkesbury, and was the first of the religious houses built on the Frome's north bank. Sited on a terrace nearly fifty feet above the river, St James's would have been a dominant presence to the north of the town. Below it, stretching down to the river, was Broadmead, a suburb developed by the priory in the later thirteenth

[647] Bettey, *Medieval Friaries, Hospitals and Chapelries*, 11-14. The site of the Carmelite Friary is now occupied by the Colston Hall; one of the guest houses survives, though much rebuilt, as the Red Lodge, while Pipe Lane, running from the western end of the Colston Hall extension to the Centre, preserves the memory of the friary's conduit. For a late 14th-century description of London's Blackfriars, which was probably not dissimilar to its Bristol equivalent, or to that town's Carmelite and Franciscan friaries, see Schofield and Stell, "Built Environment", 383-4.

[648] Roger Price with Michael Ponsford, *St Bartholomew's Hospital*, *Bristol. The Excavation of a Medieval Hospital: 1976-8,* Council for British Archaeology Research Report, 110 (York, 1998), 120-1.

[649] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 192, 301, 443, 460; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 47; Bettey, *Medieval Friaries, Hospitals and Chapelries*, 8-11.

[650] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 401.

[651] The following account of St James is based on Jackson, *Excavations at St James's Priory*, 8-27, 192-3.

century to provide rental income.[652] St James's Back was probably laid out as a carriageway for building materials landed at a quay on the Frome during the priory's construction, but with the development of Broadmead it served to connect this suburb with the priory, while the quay was replaced by a bridge to Pithay Gate. The spiritual needs of Broadmead's inhabitants were supplied by the priory, whose nave functioned as the parish church. The parishioners financed the church tower, added in the later fourteenth century, and many of them were buried in the priory's lay churchyard. St James's Barton, the priory farm, was located to the east of the precinct. The priory was also the site of the Earl's Court, or honour court of the lordship of Gloucester.

In addition to the Pithay Bridge, Broadmead was connected with the old town by Monk's Bridge, so-called because it gave direct access to the priory. Broadmead's origins as a planned suburb are still apparent from its grid street-plan, described by Worcestre as consisting of Broadmead itself, King Street (now Horsefair) and Rush Lane or Irishmead, running east-west from St James's Back, and Marshall Street (Merchant Street) running from Redland in the north southwards to the Weir on the north bank of the Frome.[653] At the junction of Marshall Street and King Street Worcestre noted what he called the "Bars" ("Barrys"), evidently a barrier that could block off this major approach road to Bristol; he also noted that the brothels owned by his father had been to the east of the bars, suggesting that the Bars marked some sort of boundary within the town and county, beyond which prostitutes were allowed to operate.[654] In all probability barriers were erected at all of the principal thoroughfares into Bristol where there was no other physical means of controlling access. Worcestre does not mention them, but it would be logical for similar barriers to have been in place at the junction of Broadmead and Marshall Street, a supposition made more likely by Worcestre's note that a fork in the road near St Michael's Church was called lez barres, since this was another major route leading to the walled area of Bristol.[655] That such barriers were thought necessary, despite the fact that the roads through Broadmead and from St Michael's Hill all entered the centre of town through mural gateways, suggests that the town wall was deemed inadequate as a means of regulating access and collecting tolls.

The Dominican friary stood at the opposite corner of Broadmead to the priory, to the north of the castle, from which it was separated by the Frome.[656] This friary had been founded in 1227 by Maurice de Gaunt, who also founded St Mark's Hospital with Matthew de Gurney. The Dominicans laid great stress on preaching, and hence their church was built to accommodate a large congregation, with a two-aisled nave. Worcestre measured the nave at 93 feet long and 63 feet wide. In addition, a stone cross and pulpit in the grounds would have been used for open-air preaching. The Bakers' Guild chapel was located here. The two buildings that have survived of the cloister ranges to the south of the church contain work of high quality, suggesting that the church itself would have been a splendid structure. Like the Bristol Carmelites and

---

[652] This development of a suburb by a religious house can be mirrored in, for example, Gloucester and Worcester: Baker and Holt, *Urban Growth*, 325-44, 361-4.

[653] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 61.

[654] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 13, 91, 169-70, 196, 290, 300. The exclusion of prostitutes from the centre of town was a common tactic: Gervase Rosser, "Urban Culture and the Church", in *CUHB*, 335-69, at 342-3. Such basic civic regulation of prostitution is in contrast to Sandwich's municipally-operated brothel: Clarke, Pearson, Mate, Parfitt, Sandwich, 135.

[655] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 408. The presence of similar features in Chester is suggested in Lewis, "Framing Medieval Chester", 51, and see Keene, "Suburban Growth", 113.

[656] This paragraph is based on Bettey, *Medieval Friaries, Hospitals and Chapelries*, pp. 4-8, and Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 48.

Franciscans, the Dominicans had their own water supply, theirs originating in the Penny Well, near Bagpath Mill.

On the banks of the Frome south of the Dominican Friary was the Weir and what Worcestre described as the place where Bristol's horses were normally watered, as well as the castle mills (two, housed in the same large building: their profits went to St James's Priory) and a bridge.[657] Following a path along the eastern bank of the castle ditch would have brought Worcestre to Old Market and the two streets running parallel to it, one to the north and the other to the south. Old Market was paved and sufficiently wide to allow for market stalls to be erected down its length: on market days the two parallel roads, later known as Redcross Street and Jacob's Lane, could take the traffic that would otherwise have used Old Market. At the western, castle end of Old Market was a stone cross; at the eastern end stood the Trinity Hospital and, just beyond that, Lawford's Gate, which Worcestre claims was rebuilt by John Barstaple, the founder of Trinity Hospital. Beyond that was St Lawrence's leper hospital. Bounding the two streets either side of Old Market, a bank and ditch provided an outwork for the castle and defended, or at least demarcated, this easternmost suburb. Just to the east of Lawford's Gate a standing stone marked the county boundary.[658]

Bristol Castle dominated the townscape, a massive presence sat between the town centre and Old Market, it straddled the only landward approach to Bristol. Insofar as it featured on the town's heraldic arms - of a ship emerging from what appears to be the castle's watergate - it could be said to have been Bristol's prime visual representation. In its thirteenth-century hay-day Bristol's castle was among the most magnificent in the realm, but by 1480 its best years were long past.[659] The events of 1399, when the castle was garrisoned against Henry Bolingbroke, showed that it could still be considered a military strongpoint at the beginning of the century, and it continued to be kept in repair until the 1460s with, for example, refurbishments ahead of Henry IV's visit in 1403 (probably very necessary following its ransacking four years earlier), and an extensive programme of work executed in the 1440s and '50s, but thereafter it quickly fell into ruin.[660] On 12 September 1480 Worcestre visited the castle. What he saw dismayed him. This was a structure "broken down and in an extremely bad state of repair": the hall, "formerly splendid in length, width and height", was now "wholly ruinous"; a chapel and chambers on the north side of the hall, once "splendid" and "very beautiful", were now "roofless, bare, and stripped of floors and ceilings". The living accommodation of the castle constable was entirely "thrown down to the ground and ruinous, whence arises great sadness". The castle was no longer a fit place for its constable to stay, let alone a visiting monarch; when Worcestre visited it the castle was probably deserted apart from its porter and two watchmen, one of whom gave him information about the structure's dimensions and would have allowed him

[657] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 19, 170, 179, 188, 215. Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 69.
[658] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 179, 184-91.
[659] For the castle's history see *Accounts of the Constables of Bristol Castle in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. Margaret Sharp, BRS, 34 (1982); Michael Ponsford, "Bristol Castle: Archaeology and the History of a Royal Fortress" (unpublished University of Bristol M.Litt. thesis, 1979) and, for a brief overview, Peter Fleming, *Bristol Castle: A Political History*, BBHA, 110 (2004).
[660] R. A. Brown, H. M. Colvin and A. J. Taylor, *The History of the King's Works*, vol. 2 (London: HMSO, 1963), 581.

inside to compile his notes.[661] Nonetheless, the twelfth-century keep was still standing and was still very impressive. Even a century later, when an anonymous local artist commemorated Elizabeth I's visit to the town in 1574, he chose to portray her in front of the keep, seemingly regarding this as the most immediately recognisable visual signifier of the town. Apart from this sketch the only extant image of the castle is that of the keep in one of the marginal illustrations to Millerd's map of 1673. Since this was produced twenty years after the castle's demolition its accuracy can only be judged by comparison with the earlier anonymous illustration of it as the background to Elizabeth I's visit. This shows that, while there are detailed differences, in general the Millerd image is very close to the earlier one, which probably served as its model.[662] In 1480, for all that the castle remained Bristol's "logo", and may have epitomised faded glory, it was also a crumbling ruin that prevented the town's expansion to the north-east, and as a royal enclave, and thus exempted from the charter of 1373, administratively it remained an island of Gloucestershire at the heart of the county of Bristol.

The castle's western entrance was through Newgate, which connected its defences with those of the town. Here Worcestre again made a distinction between the area inside the wall as being within Bristol, and the outside, which was the area beyond the wall. He noted that to the west of the gate was "where the old Towne walle stode": Millerd's map of 1673 shows the area immediately adjoining Newgate without any town wall, and evidently this had already disappeared by 1480.[663] Worcestre also described the former location of the demolished stretch of wall that once contained the oldest gate, Aldgate, between Pithay Gate and Newgate, and presumably Newgate was built as its replacement.[664] In the first half of the century Newgate housed the school at which Robert Londe had been master and Worcestre, probably, a pupil, but this had moved elsewhere by 1449/50, when the town gaol was relocated here from its former home in a mural tower between the Pithay and Monk's Bridge.[665]

Immediately in front of Newgate was the junction between Wine Street and St Peter's Street. Worcestre had little to say about St Peter's church, but he did make reference to the nearby well or fountain (later known as St Peter's Pump) "as a tall building of freestone" recently erected according to the terms of the will of William Canynges: this was in fact a stone cross built over the well by William Spencer, as a Canynges executor.[666] Back on Wine Street, at the junction with Pithay, the pillory and lock-up stood in the middle of the road, described in detail by Worcestre:

> THE PUBLIC PILLORY
>
> The house of punishment and the public pillory [Domus justicie & officij Collistrigij], situated about the middle of Wynch Street, in front of the end of the road from Pithay Gate, is circular, constructed in fine freestone work, as broad as [it is] high, with cells and

[661] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 396, 422, 437. For the watchmen, see *CPR*, 1441-1446, 142. Worcestre's opinion was confirmed fifty years later by John Leland, who found that the castle "all tendithe to ruine": Brown, Colvin and Taylor, *History of the King's Works*, 581.

[662] I am grateful to my colleague, Professor Steve Poole, and the curatorial staff of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, for bringing the image of Elizabeth I's visit to my attention.

[663] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 51.

[664] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 60.

[665] Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 69.

[666] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 80, 296. Canynges owned fourteen shops in this area: E. Boucher, "St Edith's Well and St Peter's Cross", *TBGAS*, 61 (1939), 95-106; Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 69. The cross was later moved to Stourhead, along with the High Cross and Stallage Cross.

> windows with close bars of wrought iron. A circuit of the said pillory building measures in length --- steps. And above the pillory building is the device of timber work, built by carpenters, to pillory wicked people [infamos homines] or wrongdoers in baking of bread, tourtes etc.[667]

This was the lock-up for those who had offended against civic ordinances; debtors, and those awaiting trial for alleged felonies committed against statute or common law, were housed in the gaol at Monk's Bridge or, later, Newgate.[668] Pithay itself took its name from the Norman-French words puit and hay, denoting a well within an enclosure, and this is just how Worcestre described the feature that gave the street its name:

> In Pithay Street, within Aylward Gate or Pithay Gate, in a big area like a triangle nearby, there is a large and deep well, beautifully surrounded and [built] up with freestone, for people drawing well-water. And the said well [is] neatly roofed overwith tiles, to protect the people drawing water from rain or stormy weather ...[669]

In addition, Wine Street is derived from "Wynch Strete", which probably referred to the device used for lowering and raising buckets into the well. Next to the well was a latrine: "The public latrine building (in English, 'a privy'), for women as well as men, [is] in the wide southern area of the said triangle".[670] One hopes that the latter was not allowed to drain into the water-table drawn upon by the former. Here was a concentration of features that would have emphasised good governance and the provision of civic amenities. Indeed, the route along Wine Street from the town gaol, either at Monk's Bridge or Newgate, past the pillory, well and latrine at Pithay, to the High Cross, there connecting with the north-south route between St John's conduit, the Guildhall, Tolzey, St Nicholas conduit and the council rooms and public latrines on the Bridge, could be seen as symbolising two important functions of civic government: on the one hand to keep order and punish wrongdoers, on the other to provide and maintain basic amenities for the citizens.[671]

At the High Cross end of Corn Street, All Saints' church stood opposite St Ewen's. Both churches had been founded by the mid-twelfth century. All Saints' had been extensively rebuilt, partly at the cost of its parishioners, from the 1420s to the 1440s, when two houses had also been built at each of its western corners, one to house the parish clergy, the other to accommodate the Guild of Kalendars and, probably, its library, refounded by John Carpenter, bishop of Worcester, in 1464. Beneath the Kalendars' Hall was a conduit house. Outside the west front of All Saints was All Saints' Lane, home to an alms house for eight poor women, founded in 1350.[672]

A little further along Corn Street, at the corner with Small Street, stood St Werburgh's Church, named for a Mercian saint otherwise associated with Chester, which suggests that the dedication dates from the pre-Conquest period, when Bristol

---

[667] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 96.
[668] For discussion of this building's function see Fleming, "Processing Power", 145-8.
[669] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 97.
[670] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 98. In 1373 an inquisition was held before the mayor into a rent payable to the commonalty for the maintenance of a latrine in Lewinsmead, which may be identical to the Pithay latrine: LRBB, vol. 1, p. 16.
[671] An interpretation discussed at greater length in Fleming, "Processing Power", 159-64.
[672] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 33, 82; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480".

and Chester stood at either ends of the Kingdom of Mercia.[673] In 1480 the church was largely the product of the fourteenth century, with a recently-completed fifteenth-century tower.[674] At the western end of Corn Street was the fourth of the principal town gates and the third of the gate-churches: St Leonard's was described by Worcestre as a small church, built over a complex three-way gatehouse which connected Corn Street with Baldwin Street and Fish Lane, running north-south, and thence to Marsh Street to the west, with a smaller adjoining gateway arch between St Leonard's Lane and St Nicholas Street, two of the lanes that ran immediately inside the first town wall.[675] Just north of St Leonard's was St Stephen's, built to serve the parish that developed between the old town wall and the thirteenth-century Marsh Wall. In 1480 the church had only very recently been rebuilt, and the tower may still have been under construction, since Worcestre was able to discuss its design with the master mason, Benedict Crosse, who may indeed have produced the drawing of the mouldings, with accompanying text, which appears among Worcestre's notes. Among the wealthy parishioners who had helped finance the rebuilding was John Leycestre (d. 1437), and John Shipward, who may have provided the new tower.[676]

Fisher Lane opened out into a salted fish market and a triangular space that gave onto the Key, the quayside along the Frome channel dug in the mid thirteenth century. To one side of this triangle stood the royal customs house and in the middle "a very beautiful [pulcharima [sic]] freestone building, round and tall, built of richly worked freestone, in which is a water-conduit of lead ...", built for the convenience of the town [erectum pro commodo ville] and supplied with water from Boiling Well in Ashley Vale.[677] Following the quayside eastwards, towards St Lawrence's Church, Worcestre noted how the houses fronting the quayside were jettied over the footpath, "so that a man can pass dry-shod".[678] Walking in the other direction brought Worcestre to the great tower marking the beginning of the western extension of the Marsh Wall that ran parallel with the river bank. Continuing south-westwards, between the wall and the river, and passing the double watergate of two tunnels that pierced the wall and ran down either to a slip or a dry dock, Worcestre arrived at the north-western corner of the Marsh Wall. Beyond lay the Marsh itself. He estimated the height of the wall at forty feet, and its width at eight feet. The Marsh was far from deserted. Here, Worcestre noted, was "... the place where new ships are set up and fitted out, and where poles and masts of fir as well as anchors lie; and [where are] many warehouses ..." and the place "where great ships lie on the mud at the western end of the Key". Of particular note was the ship built for John Burton, who had died in 1455.[679] In addition to ship-building, the

[673] Catherine A. M. Clarke, "Remembering Anglo-Saxon Mercia in Late Medieval and Early Modern Chester", in *Mapping the Medieval City*, ed. Clarke, 201-18, at 201-4.
[674] Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 33.
[675] Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 37.
[676] Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 37-8.
[677] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 32, 38, 48, 104-5, 108, 223. Like Bristol Bridge, the Key and the Back would have required frequent maintenance, paid for from communal funds. For an overview of later medieval waterfronts, see Maryanne Kowaleski, "Port towns: England and Wales 1300-1540", in CUHB, 467-94, at 470-1.
[678] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 38.
[679] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 4, 39, 369, 391. L. S. Woodger, and J. S. Roskell, "Burton, John II (d. 1455) of Redcliffe Sreet, Bristol", *HPHC, 1386-1421* (http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/burton-john-ii-1455 [accessed 15/05/13]).

Marsh was used for bull and bear-baiting, duck-hunting, wrestling contests, archery practice, and as a communal tip.[680]

At the north-western edge of the Marsh stood Gib Tailor, a tall timber post set as a navigation marker at the confluence of the Avon and the Frome. Standing with his back to the post Worcestre would have appreciated a view that took in most of the town.[681] Across the marsh ran the grey ribbon of the town wall with its towers and gatehouses. Behind this rose the tower of St Stephen's church, and above that, on its promontory, stood the old town wall, with St Leonard's church and gateway in its midst. Clustered above the wall in the middle distance were the eight church towers of the central town churches. Behind all this loomed the castle, its high walls, barbican and great keep blocking the view to the east. Immediately to Worcestre's left was the Frome and the ocean-going ships being towed by rowing boats to and from the Key. Dominating the cliff edge behind the marsh on the north bank was St Augustine's Abbey. High on its hill, the abbey church commanded the prospect looking from west to east, and its tower would have been the first landmark for those approaching the town from this direction. Also visible, rising behind the abbey, was Brandon Hill with its stone cross. The tower of St Mark's Hospital chapel could be seen across the green from the abbey, and from here north-eastwards spread the gardens and orchards of the religious houses along the north bank. The impressive tower of the Carmelite's chapel could be seen a little further up the hill from the river. To his right, across the Avon busy with Welsh boats and other coasting vessels Worcestre would have admired the edifice of St Mary Redcliffe, with its now truncated tower, and the adjacent St John's Hospital. The only secular building in this direction to have rivalled the church and hospital was the former Canynges house and tower. Thus, Bristol would have appeared as rising up from the surrounding marsh and rivers under a coronet of church towers and spires, their honey-coloured stone set off against the background of the massive, but increasingly shabby, walls of the castle; to north and south, embracing the settlement, stood religious houses built onto the high ground above the two rivers. While the castle, even if conveying only faded glory, would still have been impressive, as would the town walls and their towers, many of which had been converted to domestic uses, from this standpoint it would have been the ecclesiastical buildings that really caught the eye.[682] The central town was bound on either side by the visual evidence of its prosperity, the ships and boats crowding up against its quays and presenting a forest of masts and spars on either side, but beyond and above this, around fifty feet above sea level, the line of religious houses and churches, beginning to the north with the Abbey and to the south with St John's Hospital, appeared to hold Bristol in its embrace. In large measure this was an appropriate visual symbol: here there appears to have been little overt tension between God and Mammon, and the inhabitants of this Holy City were overwhelmingly both pious and intent on making money.

From Gib Tailor Worcestre could have set off back to his sister's house down the red-earth path he noted running north to south across the Marsh, thereby reaching the Ropemakers' Hall and public latrine on the western end of the Back on the north bank of

[680]Fleming and Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol*, 78.

[681] This paragraph presents an imagined set of visual perceptions, based on the evidence presented by Worcestre's writings and other sources, rather than attempting to speculate on the whole range of sensory impressions. The sounds and smells would doubtless have been evocative, memorable and even pungent, but they can only be guessed at.

[682] This passage owes a considerable debt to Burgess, "Repertory for Reinforcement", 95-6.

the Avon.[683] Along the Back were three structures associated with private philanthropy for the public good. First was the crane, provided by Alice Chestre and described by Worcestre as, "... a public machine [officium jnstrumenti] ... situated upon the Back, near the gate called Marsh Gate, well founded and firmly fixed into the ground."[684] Next, Thomas Knap's chapel, dedicated to St John the Evangelist, was already in existence by the time Knap made his will in 1404, in which document he requested burial in his chapel.[685] Two priests were attached to the chapel. According to Worcestre, "At 5 o'clock in the morning every single day his said chaplains or one of them say mass for the merchants, seamen, craftsmen and servants able to go and hear mass in the early morning.'[686] The third structure was described by Worcestre thus: "A house and lodging for the public benefit of the town, called a Cloth Hall, was some time since set up upon The Back, formerly Robert Sturmy's, a respected merchant of the town of Bristol, for lodging and keeping ample hospitality both for foreign merchants and for other gentry [alijs generosis]".[687]

Two slips provided access to the Avon from the Back: one near Knap's Chapel, the other at the junction with Baldwin Street, and both took the form of a flight of 80 to 92 steps down to the river bed, a distance of 36 to 42 feet. According to Worcestre, at least one of these slips was thirty feet wide which, like the stepped quay at Redcliffe, facilitated the loading and unloading of ships at various tidal levels.[688] However, he also mentions a very different function, describing this as a place,

> where women wash woollen cloths [pannos lineos (linen): recte laneos, 'woollen'?]:sometimes I have seen 12 women at a time at the foot [of the slip] at the river Avon, washing woollen cloths [pannos lineos] and the other household items [necessaria]. For the goodwives [mulieres honeste], when the tide there flows back towards the sea, so that the river Avon coming from Bristol Bridge shall be clear and fresh so then they do their washing at [those] particular times of the day.[689]

The eastern end of the Back began at the junction with Baldwin Street, marked by a stone cross.[690] From here, it was but a short walk back across Bristol Bridge, and so home to his sister's house.

The Distribution of Wealth within the Town

While local history and politics played their part in the divisions created within Bristol's urban space in the minds of its fifteenth-century inhabitants, socio-economic factors must also have been important in creating distinctive neighbourhoods within the town.

---

[683] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 4.
[684] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 253. For the financial benefts to be obtained from leasing out a town crane, and the likely design of the structure, see Clarke, Pearson, Mate and Parfitt, Sandwich 127, 215-6.
[685] TNA PROB 11/2A/113; Leech, *Topography*, p. 168.
[686] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 252; Neale, "William Worcestre: Bristol Churches in 1480", 51.
[687] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 254. At some point between 1415 and 1421 the mayor and burgesses of Bristol petitioned parliament for permission to build a "common hall" for the display and sale of merchandise brought by foreign cloth merchants: TNA SC 8/96/4789. The bequest of Sturmy's property finally supplied this need.
[688] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 43, 198, 217. According to Worcestre, when there is a new spring tide, on the first day of the change of the moon, the depth of the Avon is 42-48 feet: ibid., no. 231.
[689] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 250.
[690] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos. 44, 124, 137, 221.

Our ability to explore this issue in any systematic way is seriously hampered by the absence of usable tax returns for Bristol before 1524. The detailed poll tax returns for the later fourteenth century do not survive for Bristol, and nothing similar was attempted during the fifteenth century.[691] In an attempt to get some sort of picture of the socio-economic geography of Bristol before the 1520s, Sacks used wills and deeds to identify the residences of 38 members of common council between 1381 and 1409. Of these, twenty lived in the nine central parishes, within the original circuit of walls, but excluding what Sacks defined as the "portside" parishes of St Nicholas and St Stephen, while the remaining eighteen lived south or east of the Avon.[692] In her analysis of 1000 Bristol merchants between 1350 and 1500, and on the basis of similar documentary evidence, Beethan-Fisher estimated that only 38 per cent lived in the central area within the original town wall; the parish with the highest percentage of merchant residences was St Stephen's, with 16%, followed by St Werburgh (13%), St Thomas (11%), St Nicholas (10%), St Mary Redcliffe (8%), and Temple (8%). The three parishes of St Stephen, St Werburgh and St Thomas accounted for 47 per cent of what Beethan-Fisher defined as the major merchants and 46 per cent of those who served as mayor during this period.[693] Clearly, while the original town walls were thought to contain 'Bristol proper', this did not play an important part in influencing the elite in their choice of residential neighbourhood.

The earliest detailed survey of Bristol's population is provided by the returns to the lay subsidy of 1524/5.[694] The valuation was, broadly speaking, divided between property, defined as land or goods, and wages. In Bristol the subsidy was levied on individuals worth at least twenty shillings (£1) in terms of annual property value or income from wages. The waged included individuals designated as (servientes) and associated with a property-owner, as well as other, unattached employees; in the following analysis these two groups are treated separately.[695]

The question of defining serviens/servientes must be addressed before any further progress can be made with the analysis of these figures. The assumption that the word can simply be translated as "domestic servant" is probably incorrect. Two Latin words were commonly used in this period to refer to such individuals, the other being famulans or famul/us/a, which had a more exclusive association with domestic servant. Serviens could apply to a wide range of occupations concerned with rendering some form of service, ranging all the way up to a serjeant-at-law.[696] Dyer has suggested that the majority of urban domestic servants, and indeed many journeymen, were hired on short-term contracts – some on a daily basis – and as such would not have fallen into the subsidy assessor's net, and nor would the majority of domestics for whom board and lodging was a major component of their remuneration; as he points out, female domestics and apprentices are missing from the returns. He suggests that the servants in the returns were mainly 'the foreman-type of employee who was engaged on an annual contract'.[697] Certainly, a great number of domestic servants were omitted: for

---

[691] M. Jurkowski, C. L. Smith & D. Crook, *Lay Taxes in England and Wales, 1188-1688* (Kew, 1998), 137-9.

[692] Sacks, *Widening Gate*, 146-7.

[693] Beethan-Fisher, "Merchants of Medieval Bristol", 154-5.

[694] For a discussion of the problems inherent in the analysis of the returns, see Dyer, "'Urban Decline' in England", 267-72.

[695] *The Bristol and Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy of 1523-1527*, ed. M. A. Faraday, *BGAS*, 23 (2009), xv-lx; the Bristol returns are at 29-60, 203-29.

[696] R. E. Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List* (1994 edn, OUP), 185, 436.

[697] Dyer, "'Urban Decline' in England", 270.

example, it is hard to believe that George Hall, assessed on £50 worth of goods in his house on Wine Street, or the widow Cecilia Bedford, assessed on £80 worth of goods in her house on Redcliffe Street, lived without servants, but neither has any returned under their name.[698] Conversely, it is equally unlikely that the three or four servientes retained by some relatively humble households assessed on only £10 in goods were domestic servants. Such cases, like the seven servientes employed by both John Griffith (assessed at £20 in goods) and David Wyllis (assessedku at £40), both in St Mary-le-Port Street, and the below-average percentage of servientes in such wealthy zones as St Ewen's and St Stephens/Marsh, suggest that they were involved in some form of industrial activity, rather than simply as domestic labour.[699] If so, and if we accept Dyer's characterisation of them as being of "foreman" status, then they may very well have been overseeing a larger number of casual labourers who do not appear in the returns. This in turn leads us to imagine establishments such as those of John Griffith and David Willys as large workshops with roll calls of employees running well into double figures: in a later age they might even have been called factories. Concluding that some of the servientes were employed in an industrial, productive capacity brings us to consider the nature of the others assessed on wages. While there is little apparent correlation between the two groups assessed on wages, it is clear from the returns that they were regarded as being different. The obvious assumption is that this group, while employed by more prosperous individuals who were assessed on their property, lived apart from them, while the servientes lived under the same roof as their masters.

The Bristol returns record the amount of tax paid by named individuals on a street-by-street basis, and so provide a wealth of data. However, they come a generation after the end of the fifteenth century, and so it is unclear how representative they are of conditions before 1500. In his discussion of the distribution of wealth in later medieval

[698] *The Bristol and Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy*, ed. Faraday, 48, 53.

[699] Examples of households with high numbers of servientes in the 1524 returns are given below(all references are to *Bristol and Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy*, ed. Faraday,):

Master's name	Number of servants	Location	Value of goods assessed (£)	Faraday, p.
Richard Amerley	3	Mary-le-Port St	10	50
James Brown	3	Bristol Bridge	10	54
John Edwards	5	Mary-le-Port St	180	49
John Griffith	7	Mary-le-Port St	20	50
Thomas Kere	4	High St	10	51
Nicholas Shepard	3	Shambles	24	51
Thomas Smyth, purser	3	Bristol Bridge	40	39
David Willys	7	Mary-le-Port St	40	50
John Worley	3	Mary-le-Port St	10	220

and Tudor Bristol Sacks suggested that the period as a whole saw a growing concentration of wealth in the hands of the mercantile elite, and that this process was matched by increasing geographical segregation on the basis of wealth, so it would be unwise to assume that the pattern in 1524/5 would also be found a century earlier.[700]

In his analysis of the 1524/5 returns Sacks concluded that the central and portside parishes accounted for 72 per cent of the town's assessed wealth while containing less than half of the population. The overwhelming majority of the populationin this area were assessed on goods rather than wages, and he found that those in the latter category were largely confined to the streets adjoining the waterfront. Beyond the Avon and Frome and around Old Market east of the castle assessed individuals tended to have smaller holdings and were far more likely to be employees. From this and other evidence Sacks concluded that the old centre of town was primarily the preserve of overseas merchants, substantial traders and retailers, while manufacturers such as clothiers, brewers and tanners, and artisans, including weavers and wiredrawers, lived beyond the rivers and the castle, with leather and brewing tending to be concentrated north of the Frome and textile industries south of the Avon.

The detail supplied by the returns allows us to go a little deeper. The following table represents the data divided into twelve zones.

TABLE XI: 1524 LAY SUBSIDY RETURNS, BRISTOL

Zone	Total assessed population	Number assessed on property (% of total assessed zone/town population)	Total value of property £	Mean average value of property £	Number of servientes (% of total assessed zone/town population)	Number of other employees (% of total assessed zone/town population)	Total number of waged (% of total assessed zone/town population)
1) Centre, St Ewen's Ward	60	53 (88.3)	1381	26.0	7 (11.6)	0 (0)	7 (11.6)
2) Centre: Holy Trinity Ward	90	81 (90)	781	9.6	9 (9.1)	0 (0)	9 (10)
3) Centre: St Mary-le-Port Ward	153	99 (64.7)	1479.6	14.9	44 (28.7)	10 (6.5)	54 (35.2)
4) Centre: All Saints Ward	42	35 (83.3)	1229	35.1	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	7 (16.6)
5) St Stephens, Marsh	181	160 (88.4)	2064	12.9	17 (9.4)	4 (2.2)	21 (11.6)
6) Abbey	42	30 (71.4)	106	3.5	10 (23.8)	2 (4.7)	12 (28.5)
7) North Bank of Frome	66	60 (90.9)	304	5.0	6 (9.0)	0 (0)	6 (9.0)
8) South Bank of Frome	33	31 (93.9)	130	4.2	2 (6.0)	0 (0)	2 (6.0)
9) Broadmead	118	69 (58.4)	586	8.4	37 (33.6)	12 (10.1)	49 (41.5)

[700] This, and the following paragraph, is based on, Sacks, *Widening Gate*, 147-9.

10) Old Market	23	17 (73.9)	256	15.0	6 (26.0)	0 (0)	6 (26.0)
11) Bristol Bridge	45	33 (73.3)	659	19.9	3 (6.6)	9 (20)	12 (26.6)
12) South of Avon	228	188 (82.4)	1239.5	6.5	7 (3.0)	33 (14.4)	40 (17.5)
Totals	1081	856 (79.1)	10215.1	11.9	154 (14.2)	71 (6.5)	225 (20.8)

Clearly, these returns did not cover all of Bristol's population, and only a small proportion of the short-fall can be accounted for by an unquantifiable level of corruption and tax-avoidance. Most, but not all, of those assessed on property and those other than servientes assessed on wages would have been heads of households with dependants. The proportion of these, and the size of the average household, are matters for guesswork, but using a multiplier of four (that is, assuming that on average every one of the 856 assessed on their property and 71 non-servientes assessed on their wages had three dependants, typically a wife and two children), gives a total of 3,708; adopting a multiplier of five gives 4,635.[701] Adding the 154 servientes and another 200 as a generous estimate for the number of Bristol clergy still only takes the figure to 4,062 or 4,989.[702]

Addressing the question of what proportion of Bristol's total population is represented by this estimate of 4,062/4,989 covered by the 1524 assessment is not straightforward. The earliest data we have for estimating Bristol's total population that is anything like comprehensive comes from as late as 1548. These are the Bristol returns to the national inquisition into the 'houseling' population, that is, the number of communicants within each parish, conducted as part of the process of the dissolution of the chantries.[703] In theory, every adult should have been counted: obviously, we have to accept the probability of under-assessment, but this cannot be quantified, and so in these calculations we assume that it was at a similar level to that of 1524. In this context an adult constituted someone who had taken their first communion, which would usually have occurred between the ages of seven and ten.[704] For Bristol 5976 communicants were counted.[705] Assuming an age of first communion of ten, and that about a quarter of the population were below this age, means that to arrive at an estimate of Bristol's total population from this figure we have to multiply it by 1.3, which gives 7,768.8. This is close to Dyer's estimate for Bristol's total population based on the 1524 subsidy, of approximately 7000, but given the town's early sixteenth-century economic decline, it is likely that the population was gently contracting between 1524 and 1548, so that an estimate for 1524 of about 8,000 might be safer. [706]

---

[701] For family size see Beethan-Fisher, "Merchants of Medieval Bristol", 160, 169.

[702] Skeeters, *Community and Clergy*, 12-13 estimated the total number of Bristol clergy in 1530 at 140, but suggested that this was probably an under-estimate, and that the number had recently fallen, so 200 seems a reasonable estimate for 1524.

[703] J. Maclean (ed.), "Chantry Certificates, Gloucestershire', *TBGAS*, 8 (1883-4), 229-308.

[704] E. A. Wrigley and R. Schofield, *The Population History of England and Wales 1541-1871* (CUP, 1981), 565-6.

[705] Lee, "Political Communication", 150-1.

[706] Dyer, "'Urban Decline' in England", 277-8. Dyer based his analysis on figures taken from J. Sheail, "The Regional Distribution of Wealth … in the Lay Subsidy Returns (1524-5)" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1968), which gives a figure for Bristol's total assessed population of 1166, slightly higher than the one used here, derived from the 1524 returns. Dyer multiplied this by a factor of 6 to arrive at a total population of 7,000. The multiplier of 6 relates to household size, that is, to the co-resident kin-group and live-in employees, apprentices etc.

Accepting this figure means that between 3,000 and 4000 Bristolians, up to half of the total population, were unrepresented in the subsidy returns. While it would appear logical to assume that the unrepresented had annual incomes below the £1 threshold, we can only guess at the proportion of this group made up of the genuinely impoverished, as opposed to apprentices, domestic servants and other employees hired on a short-term basis who were not assessed. Where those unrepresented by the assessment lived is another imponderable, but their distribution would have a considerable bearing on the picture we are able to draw from the assessments.

Notwithstanding these caveats, we are still able to draw some tentative conclusions from the figures. The two zones with the highest proportion of wealthy property-owners are the central quadrants of All Saints and St Ewen's, both to the west of the Broad Street-High Street meridian, followed by Bristol Bridge. The three next wealthiest, by this definition, are Old Market; St Mary-le-Port, the south-eastern quadrant within the old centre; and St Stephen's/Marsh, covering the area between the southern stretch of the original wall and the thirteenth-century wall north of the Marsh. The remaining central quadrant, Holy Trinity, in the north-east, is among the poorer zones. All of the wealthiest zones lay within the thirteenth-century walls north of the Avon or, in the case of Old Market, within the ditch and gate that protected the eastern approach to this suburb. The relative wealth of Old Market is perhaps surprising, given that it was separated from central Bristol by the castle. While it is clear that not all of the wealthiest chose to live within the original walls, even including the relatively poor Holy Trinity zone this central area was still among Bristol's wealthiest neighbourhoods: taken together, the mean average property value for all four zones is £17.7, a sum exceeded only by Bristol Bridge.

The three poorest zones are all to the north-west of the old intra-mural town, located in an arc from the Abbey to the area between the old wall and the thirteenth-century wall fronting the Frome. Grope Lane, running outside the old wall past St John's Gate, and Host Street, ascending the Frome's river-cliff, seem both to have taken their name from the notoriety they acquired as areas of brothels and prostitution (Gropecunt Lane and Hors (whores) Strete), and they may have continued to provide such services into the early Tudor period.[707] The high proportion of servientes in the streets around the Abbey is entirely accounted for by the inclusion of lay brethren and servants of this house and of St Mark's.

To what extent does the evidence from the 1524 returns accord with the findings of Sacks and Beethan-Fisher? The foregoing analysis of the 1524 returns has shown that the four old-town zones together held a third of Bristol's total assessed population, including nearly a third of all those assessed on property (32.1%), and just over a third of the total assessed on wages, both servientes and non-servientes (34.6); but they contained nearly half (47.8%) of the total wealth of those assessed on property. There was certainly a concentration of wealth in this area, which, while showing considerable internal variations, was way ahead of the other zones by a considerable margin, particularly if Bristol Bridge is treated as an extension of this central area. This substantiates to some degree Sacks's claim that there was a growing exclusivity in terms of residential zones over the course of the long fifteenth century, but there were still nothing like ghettoes based on wealth and poverty, and rich and poor still lived in proximity to each other. While no exact comparison with Beethan-Fisher's calculation is possible, the wealthy do seem to have moved to some degree from St Stephen's parish

[707] Coates and Scherr, "Some Local Place Names in Medieval and Early Modern Bristol", 162-4.

into the old town, while a more definite elite movement from south to north of the Avon is apparent from the 1524 returns. Within the old town, the small parish of All Saints' does not figure among Beethan-Fisher's most popular parishes for merchant residences, but the much larger All Saints' zone that dominates the 1524 returns, incorporates not only that part of the All Saints' Ward that lay within the wall, but also the parishes of St Werburgh's and St Nicholas, which were very popular areas for the wealthy to have their residences, so the contrast is not as great as first appears. Overall, while there were some changes in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, it seems sensible to conclude that the subsidy returns can still be accepted as a reasonably accurate guide to the distribution of wealth at the end of the preceding century.

The interpretation of these figures has an obvious bearing on how we envisage the Bristol townscape. If most of the non-serviens waged were employees living in their own dwellings and involved in manufacturing or processing, then zones such as Broadmead and the area south of the Avon, with below average property values and above average numbers of waged, take on the air of proletarian industrial suburbs. Many of their inhabitants might have been employed by craft masters or clothiers within some kind of putting-out system.[708] However, Bristol Bridge, with the highest property value but also the highest proportion of non-serviens waged labour, or the central zone of St Mary-le-Port, with both a high average property assessment and the second highest percentage of waged employees, resist such easy characterisation.

As well as showing considerable spatial variation, that is, differences in the average wealth of neighbourhoods, the 1524 returns also reveal the gulf between those at either end of the income scale. We can only guess at the how those who were too impoverished to be taxed in 1524 managed to survive, but their experiences of living in Bristol must have been very different from those at the other extreme of the socio-economic hierarchy. The assessment was made in the midst of a savage downturn in Bristol's economic fortunes which, by comparison with most of the fifteenth century, would have increased the proportion of paupers and encouraged more of its wealthiest and most dynamic to abandon the town, in many cases for London.[709] The irresistible attraction of the sixteenth-century metropolis for many at the pinnacle of Bristol's socio-economic elite meant that the disparity of wealth presented by the 1524 returns between those assessed on wages or property at the lowest level of one pound sterling, and those assessed on the highest property levels, would probably have been less than would have been the case had a similar assessment been undertaken in the previous century.

Despite this great disparity of income between richest and poorest, or perhaps partly because of it, many Bristolians with substantial disposable wealth did identify themselves with the town as one community, and expressed this sense of solidarity through philanthropy. For Alice Chestre and Thomas Knap, for example, this took the form of providing enhanced trading facilities. For others a popular focus of philanthropic activity was provided by the town's water supply. Worcestre was particularly struck by the number of conduits he found in Bristol, and he obviously saw them as a stimulus to, and expression of, civic pride. A number of testators evidently shared his enthusiasm, and left bequests for the renovation, completion or extension of

[708] This picture of a town, broadly speaking divided between a wealthy centre and poorer suburbs accords with Keene, "Suburban Growth", 115-18. This area may have been similar to the textile-producing suburb of Norwich, *Ultra Aquam*: Penelope Dunn, "Trade", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. Rawcliffe and Wilson, 213-34, at 217.

[709] Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, 280-306.

particular water pipes and conduit heads.[710] There seems to have been a concerted effort in later medieval Bristol to build a water supply that would be the envy of most other towns. Almshouses, while undeniably an acknowledgement of need and a means to the end of their founders' salvation, were also regarded by Worcestre as noteworthy reasons for civic pride. So too were parish churches. These were expressions of the piety and munificence of the whole civic community, as well as existing to serve the needs of their parishioners and patrons.

[710] For example, in 1427 Robert Colville provided 20 marks towards a projected extension of the "Pilehill" (Pylle St?) conduit to a new cistern at St Thomas Street, the one noted by Worcestre 53 years later (TNA PROB 11/3/153); while in the same year Thomas Michell left 6*s* 8*d* to repair the common pipe, called "le Keypype" (TNA PROB 11/3/149); and in 1441 Thomas Blount, merchant and burgess, provided a bequest toward the costs of building an extension to the conduit from Temple Gate to the Stallage Cross, together with a conduit house there, should the work be undertaken by his fellow parishioners (Wadley, *Wills*, 130). For urban water supplies, see Schofield and Stell, "Built Environment", 377-8.

Section Three:

Power

Chapter Seven: Bristol and the Crown

The inhabitants of fifteenth-century Bristol, both governors and governed, had to deal with a range of external authorities, from the papal curia, through central, regional and local governments (in the case of overseas merchants and mariners, these could be located in foreign territories) to regional magnates and the administrations of other towns. There is not room here to discuss all of these, so two categories have been chosen for detailed analysis, on the basis that they were the most important. These concern Bristol's administrative, jurisdictional and political relations with the English crown, to be discussed in this chapter, and with the dominant local noble family, the Berkeleys, discussed in the next. In addition, placed somewhere between the two is the Honour of Gloucester, whose Bristol appurtenances came into royal hands at the end of the twelfth century but continued to be important as sources of patronage into the later middle ages. We shall consider the Gloucester connection first, before discussing Bristol's relations with the Crown, since the latter is more readily understood against the background of the former. Having surveyed the basis of these relationships, the rest of the chapter will discuss Bristol's part in the political history of fifteenth-century England.

The Honour of Gloucester

King William II granted the manor of Bristol to Robert fitz Hamon in the 1090s, and in due course it was inherited by his son-in-law, Robert, Earl of Gloucester.[711] In 1176 Robert's grand-daughter, Isabel, co-heiress to the Honour of Gloucester, was contracted to marry Henry II's son John, the future king, who was at that point named as heir to the earldom. The Honour of Gloucester was subsequently confiscated by Henry, and while Prince John's marriage to Isabel gave him control of the earldom, his father held on to the castle. The marriage was annulled in 1199 when John became king, but he refused to relinquish the Honour. Thereafter Bristol remained as a royal possession, along with the castle, the court of the Honour of Gloucester, known as the Earl's Court, or Great Court, held at St James's Priory, and the manor and hundred of the Barton, also known as Barton Regis, comprising the lands attached to the castle that extended over two hundred acres to the north and east of Bristol.

While the castle was always kept in the king's hands, the Earl's Court and Barton were treated separately as the Bristol appurtenances of the Honour of Gloucester. Since the reign of Edward II these properties were strongly associated with the Despenser line, often being held by members of the family. Richard II granted the Earl's Court and the manor and hundred of the Barton to Thomas Despenser, Earl of Gloucester (who was lynched in Bristol in 1400), and in 1402 they were granted for life to Edward, Duke of York. On York's death in 1415 Henry V entailed them to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. While Gloucester was still alive a remainder interest in the property was created for Henry Beauchamp, Duke of Warwick (son of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick (d. 1439) and his second wife Isabel, daughter of Thomas Despenser), but he predeceased Gloucester, after whose death in 1447 they passed to Anne, infant

[711] This paragraph is based on Peter Fleming, "Crown and Town in Later Medieval England: Bristol and National Politics, 1399-1486", in *Negotiating the Politicalin Northern European Urban Society, c.1400-c.1600,* ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Tempe, Arizona/Turnhout, Belgium: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies/Brepols, 2013), 141-62, at 143-4.

daughter of the Duke of Warwick, and grand-daughter of Isabel Despenser. On Anne's death in 1449 they came to her namesake, the daughter of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick and sister of Duke Henry, who married Richard Neville, son of Richard Earl of Salisbury, bringing him both the Earls Court and Barton and, much more importantly, the earldom of Warwick.[712]

The 1373 Charter and the Structure of Royal Authority within Bristol

As a royal borough, of all Bristol's relationships with external authorities, it was that with the Crown that was its most fundamental. Bristol's constitutional character and its administrative and legal arrangements were all predicated on privileges granted to it by royal charters. The 1373 charter set the framework for Bristol's constitutional development and administrative and juridical practices until 1835, and as such it is the inevitable point from which to begin any discussion, not only of the exercise of power both between fifteenth-century Bristol and the Crown, but also within the town itself.

Before 1373 Bristol already had a high degree of autonomy and privilege: burgesses had long enjoyed freedom of toll throughout the realm, and held their property within the town by free burgage, for which they paid a landgable rent, giving them, effectively, freehold, and no burgess was to plead outside the borough; the borough largely governed itself under a mayor, two bailiffs, and a council of forty-eight.[713] The charter of 1373 extended these privileges further and, insofar as it erected Bristol into a county, gave it a unique position among English provincial towns and cities.[714] Bristolians framed their petition to Edward III, subsequently granted in large measure as the royal charter, to request that their town become a county, thereby bringing about complete severance from the jurisdiction of the surrounding counties, and justified this request with reference to the inconvenience of travelling to Gloucester or Ilchester for assizes and county courts. In addition, Bristol's geographical position straddling the boundary between the counties of Gloucesters and Somerset caused other problems, which could be settled by county status. While Temple Fee and Redcliffe had been recognised as part of Bristol's liberty since 1188, an association further strengthened by their joint efforts to build the new cut for the Frome and the other associated civil engineering works in the mid-thirteenth century, the settlements north and south of the Avon did not form one unified judicial unit before 1373: attempts to distrain on the chattels of alleged offenders in one county jurisdiction were still being thwarted by the simple expedient of moving the property across the bridge, while in the

---

[712] Michael Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 46-7, 49, 123; Ponsford, "Bristol Castle", 180-92; Accounts *of the Constables of Bristol Castle*, ed. Sharp, xxiv, xxxvi-lxiii. See *CPR*, 1399-1401, 134, for Edmund Duke of York's acquisition of the Barton in 1381. A compotus for the Barton held by Edward, Duke of York, 1412-13, is BL Egerton Roll, 8780. A 1424 receipt from the feodary of Earl's Court for aid for the marriage of Elizabeth, daughter of Lady Isabella, Countess of Warwick, daughter and heir of Thomas Despencer, is Somerset Archive and Record Service, T\PH\pls/1/16. For Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester's acquisition of the Barton, see *CPR, 1429-36*, 303, 503-64. For Anne Beauchamp as the Duke of Warwick's heiress to the Barton after the death of Gloucester, see *CPR, 1441-46*, 391, 400, 434, 443. In 1466/7 Warwick was in arrears to Queen Elizabeth Woodville for the £60 farm of the Barton: A. R. Myers, "The Household of Queen Elizabeth Woodville", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 50 (1967/8), 207-235, 443-481, at 228.

[713] Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 21-2; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 5; *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 56-64, 69-70.

[714] Norwich acquired county status in 1404: Philippa Maddern, "Order and Disorder", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. Rawcliffe and Wilson, 189-212, 382-86, at 192-3; Ruth H. Frost, "The Urban Elite", in ibid., 235-53, at 236. Southampton, was granted this status in 1447: Platt, *Medieval Southampton*, 165-8.

first third of the fourteenth century disputes with the Berkeleys over the extent of their jurisdiction south of the Avon led to serious outbreaks of violence.[715] However, while these were real issues, of themselves they are unlikely to have been sufficient motivation for Bristol to make this unprecedented request for county status, nor to justify its very considerable expenditure in promoting it: as Dr Lee has observed, the six hundred golden marks paid to the Crown as the overt price of the charter was but a part of the likely total cost, since to secure a charter required a great deal of money spent "oiling the wheels" with bribes and other inducements.[716]

The immediate spur to the petition was the recent attempt by the Crown to increase its revenues from the town following the death of Queen Philippa in 1369, and the reopening of war with France in the same year.[717] Bristol was traditionally part of the queen's dower; Edward needed to increase his income to pay for the war effort, and Bristol's deliverance into his hands with the death of his queen seemed to offer a way of augmenting the royal coffers. In its efforts to increase revenue from Bristol the royal administration claimed sources of income that had traditionally gone to meet municipal expenses, such as the profits derived from the civic authority's jurisdiction over waif and stray, wreck, chattels of felons and fugitives, and, most importantly, fines from the assize of bread and from redemptioners entering the freedom. In all, this amounted to £132 for the year 1370-1, compared to the £83 paid into the exchequer in 1369-70. Less important than the sum itself was the principle, since if such demands were allowed to continue the financial basis of Bristol's local government, and hence its autonomy, would be threatened. The 1373 petitioners were not foolish enough to challenge the king's right to take his legitimate dues from his borough of Bristol, either directly or by putting them out to farm, but they did ask that their right to impose reasonable local taxes, and to keep the proceeds for their own proper purposes, be recognised by charter, as indeed it was.

An important additional reason probably lay with the powers and position of Bristol's civic elite. The granting of county status meant that the town's governors - the mayor, bailiffs and councillors - would henceforth enjoy the status of those who governed the shires in the king's name, and would have at their disposal a similar apparatus of administrative and judicial power. What this meant in detail will be discussed in Chapter Nine, but here it is worth bearing in mind that the governors of the shires, that is, the county sheriffs, escheators, justices and commissioners, with the county representatives sitting in parliaments as knights of the shire, were drawn largely from the nobility and gentry: the borough of Bristol's elevation to county status promised its governors membership of this exclusive club.[718] By 1373 this was no longer an unrealistic or inappropriate prospect. Some of the provisions granted in that year had first been requested from Edward III in 1331, but not delivered in full. That he now agreed to them indicates the extent to which Bristol's importance and the king's trust in the town and need of its support had increased in the interim.[719]

---

[715] A copy of the petition is in *LRBB*, vol. 1, 115-26; a copy of the charter itself is in *Bristol Charters, 1155-1373*, 118-41. Sacks, Trade, Society and Politics, vol. 1, 23; Lee, "Political Communication", 30-1; Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, Chapter 5. For the Berkeleys, see below, Chapter Eight.

[716] Lee, "Political Communication", 31.

[717] The remainder of this paragraph is based on Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 72-80.

[718] Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 203.

[719] For the link between the 1331 and 1373 charters, see Christian Liddy, "Bristol and the Crown, 1326-31: Local and National Politics in the Early Years of Edward III's Reign", in *Fourteenth-Century England, III*, ed. W.M. Ormrod (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 48-65, at 56-65.

While the six hundred marks paid to the Crown for the Charter would have been very welcome, it was not of itself sufficient inducement to the king for the considerable concessions that it granted. This was not simply a case of a cash-strapped administration being prepared to surrender a significant bundle of powers if the price was right; rather, the Charter was granted in recognition of Bristol's special relationship with the Crown and, doubtless, in the hope and expectation that it would safeguard that relationship into the future. At the root of that special relationship was, essentially, Bristol's usefulness to the Crown's war effort as a source of ships and credit.[720] The preamble to the 1373 Charter stresses the value of Bristol's contribution of shipping to the Crown as a reason for the granting of county status, and Dr Liddy has persuasively argued that the illumination of the charters' initial letters reflects the Bristol elite's awareness of this military/naval context. Bristol's contribution to royal fleets had indeed been impressive. Between 1350 and 1370, Liddy found that Bristol supplied 33 ships for royal service, as against York's contribution of 16 vessels, and the former's ships tended to be larger. Before 1373 Bristol's loans to the Crown were significant but not spectacular: for example, in 1347 and 1351 it lent just over £500, around half the sum forthcoming from York. However, if Edward hoped that the grant of county status would encourage greater support, then he would not be disappointed. Bristol supplied 163 ships to the Crown between 1370 and 1400, an average of 5.4 per annum, as against the town's annual average for 1350 to 1370 of 1.6. Over the whole half century, the town supplied over two-thirds more ships than York, making it among the most important, if not the most important, source of shipping outside London. Bristol's importance as royal creditor increased even more spectacularly, so that between 1377 and 1399 it supplied one quarter of all loans to the Crown from English provincial towns and cities, making it second only to London among urban financiers. This reflected Bristol's size and wealth as England's pre-eminent provincial port. Liddy has observed that such efforts were rewarded with preferential treatment in the repayment of loans, and even with Bristolians being allowed considerable influence on royal policy in maritime and commercial matters: thanks to his work, the link between Bristol's status as a leading creditor and supplier of shipping and its privileged constitutional position after 1373 is clear.

Liddy has identified the essential nature of Bristol's relationship with the Crown in the period from 1350 to 1400, which consisted of the interplay of privilege and provision. This was a symbiotic relationship whereby the Crown was willing to grant and respect privileges to the town in return for the latter's continued generous provision of money and ships. As such, it was in the interests of both sides to maintain good relations. These basic features continued to characterise Bristol's relations with the Crown throughout the fifteenth century and beyond.

In 1373 the Crown was willing to cede considerable new powers to Bristol's civic elite, and hence surrender some of its own, at least, in formal terms, confident in the knowledge that the recipients would recognise that these would best be used in the continued defence of the status quo. This is not to say that tensions between Crown and town did not arise in the period between 1373 and 1399, but rather that when they did, the Bristol elite saw it as being in their own best interests to accommodate royal demands and to avoid outright confrontation. This position became untenable in 1399, and the usurpation in that year of Richard II by Henry Bolingbroke ushered in a century in which the relatively straightforward quid pro quo of previous years proved

[720] The following is based on Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 19-43, 52-7.

impossible. The focus of this chapter is on how Bristol negotiated the often very difficult challenges and demands of a century which began with a violent change of dynasty, and then saw the final loss of the Hundred Years' War and the outbreak of civil strife in the shape of the Wars of the Roses, during which conflict the royal line of succession was violently disrupted no less than five times in twenty-four years. Each of these events affected Bristol, and in some of them the town played a role that was of national significance. However, before this narrative can be properly understood we must first understand the administrative and jurisdictional mechanisms through which normal communications took place between Bristol and the Crown. This entails, first, a return to the provisions of the 1373 charter.

These can be summarised under six categories, of which the first, the erection of the royal borough of Bristol into a county, led logically to four of the remaining five. The new constitutional entity was provided with the administrative and judicial apparatus and personal appropriate to a county: an escheator (a crown official responsible for safeguarding royal financial interests), a sheriff (traditionally the king's chief legal and military representative in the county), county courts, and the right to elect two members of parliament. The final provision of the Charter, seemingly unrelated to Bristol's new status, reduced the number of its common councillors from 48 to 40.[721]

The office of escheator was to be filled by the mayor, and this brought him considerable new responsibilities[722] In shires the escheator was appointed by the Crown, but since the Crown played no part in the election of Bristol's mayor, the amalgamation of the posts represented a sacrifice of direct influence within the new county. Another aspect of the Crown's surrender of direct power was expressed in another provision of 1373, that the mayoral candidate should no longer, as had previously been the case, present himself to the castle constable as the Crown's representative for approval before being allowed to take up his post; henceforth, the old mayor would formally transfer his authority to his successor in the mayor-making ceremony, making this a purely internal process. The procedures for the appointment of the Bristol sheriff were more in line with practice in other counties, since he was to be chosen by the king from three candidates nominated by the Bristol governing elite. This gave the Crown some direct influence, albeit very limited. The mayor and sheriff were also ex-officio county justices, being appointed keepers of the peace by the terms of the Charter. The provision in the Charter that the town's MPs should henceforth be both parliamentary burgesses (the normal status and designation of borough representatives) and knights of the shire (equivalent to county members) gave Bristol a unique constitutional feature: none of the later urban counties were represented in parliament by knights of the shire. Something of the importance of this distinction is conveyed by a Bristol petition of 1426 which complained that the writ issued to the sheriff for the election of representatives to be sent to the present parliament referred to the town's MPs only as burgesses, not knights, to the detriment of the town's liberties; the request that this oversight be corrected was duly granted.[723]

After 1373 the Crown's influence over the county of Bristol was indirect. The mayor was undeniably the lynch-pin of the town and county's administration, and the Crown had no say in his appointment. His lieutenant, the sheriff, was chosen by the Crown, but from a limited range of candidates. The Common Council was entirely

[721] The provisions of the 1373 charter are most conveniently and clearly summarised in Elizabeth Ralph, *The Government of Bristol, 1373-1973* (Bristol Corporation, Bristol, 1973), 5.
[722] Lee, "Political Communication", 32.
[723] *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, pp. 118-21.

appointed from within the town. However, for all that Crown influence was largely indirect, it was also very real. For one thing, all town officials exercised their powers on behalf of the king, a fact emphasised in their oaths of office, but the monarch had more tangible levers of influence.

As a royal borough Bristol owed a variety of dues to the Crown, packaged into one annual payment of the fee farm. How this was to be collected and paid was a matter for the king's discretion, and could have a considerable bearing on the town's finances and ability to govern itself independently of external interference. From 1275 until the seventeenth century the profits of the town and castle of Bristol, together with the adjoining Barton, were always included in the queen's dower, and she in turn usually granted the farm of the town to its mayor and commonalty for a fixed term.[724] Thus, in 1403 Henry IV granted to Queen Joan, for life, the royal property held in Bristol, including the Shambles, all yielding an annual income of £20, together with the farm of the town, amounting to £100; five years later she entered into an indenture with Mayor John Fyssher, by which she gave these properties to the mayor and commonalty for the term of her life, with the exception of the Castle, its ditch, the royal escheats and the patronage and advowson of St Augustine's Abbey, all of which were retained in her hands, in return for an annual payment that amounted to £123 16s. 4d. after allowed deductions. This was more than the usual valuation of the fee farm at £100, but the mayor and commonalty presumably thought it worthwhile to pay extra on the promise of a long lease, and they were wise to do so, since Joan lived until 1437.[725] With her death, and with Henry VI unmarried, Bristol's farm was now under direct royal control, and in 1438 to 1439 the terms of its lease were the subject of bargaining between Crown and town. The Crown initially offered the mayor and commonalty the fee farm and the stewardship of the Tolzey and market, which was also in its gift, but they were not prepared to pay any more than £120 for this, and the Crown was unwilling to accept their offer. Consequently, it put pressure on the town by appointing Sir William Beauchamp, king's carver, as steward of the Tolzey and market; this had the desired effect, since the prospect of having this important office placed beyond their control alarmed the mayor and commonalty, who settled on a figure of £160 for a twenty-year lease, which was accepted. While this episode shows the Crown ultimately getting its way, it was only able to do so after a certain amount of brinkmanship: that the mayor and commonalty of Bristol were willing and able to engage in such bargaining with their king demonstrates their relative strength, if not the Crown's relative weakness. In 1446 the lease was extended for a further sixty years, and in 1462 Edward IV transformed this into a permanent grant of fee-farm.[726]

In addition, the Crown continued to exercise considerable influence over the port of Bristol through its appointees, the royal customers and the water bailiff. There were three to five posts in the Bristol customs administration, comprising, variously, a controller, surveyer, supervisor, gauger and searcher, and they were all within the royal gift.[727] The Water Bailiff, with his deputy, had oversight of shipping in the port, and

---

[724] Liddy, War, *Politics and Finance*, pp. 60-3, 71-80; idem., "Bristol and the Crown", pp. 54-5.
[725] *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 41-54, 102-117.
[726] *CPR*, 1436-41, 220, 286; *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 55.
[727] M. H. Mills, "The Collectors of Customs", in *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336*, *Volume II: Fiscal Administration*, ed. W. A. Morris and J. R. Strayer, Medieval Academy of America, 48 (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), 168-81; Anthony Steel, "The Collectors of the Customs at Newcastle upon Tyne in the Reign of Richard II", in *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J. Conway Davies (OUP, 1957), 390-413; Anthony Steel, "The Collectors of the Customs in the Reign of Richard II", in *British Government and Administration: Studies Presented to S. B. Chrimes*, ed. H. Hearder and H. R. Loyn (Cardiff: Wales UP, 1974),

while he worked closely with the Mayor and Common Council, he continued to be a royal appointment until 1499. Water bailiffs tended to be appointed from among the royal household, such as yeomen of the kitchen or serjeants of the pantry.[728]

There could be friction between the water bailiff and the Customs House. This was the case with Thomas Wesynham, esquire, water bailiff in the late 1430s, who in April 1441 was appointed surveyor of all royal officers in the port of Bristol; the stated reason for this promotion was "the losses sustained by him through the negligence and unfaithfulness of certain officers in concealing and appropriating customs and subsidies", and the terms of his appointment specified that,

> … no licence be granted to any merchant by the customers or controllers in any place except in the said house with the consent of the said Thomas Wesynham or his deputies, and that they may arrest and imprison all persons concealing, appropriating or stealing goods and merchandise for which customs and subsidies are due …

suggesting that there had been collusion between customs officials and Bristol merchants to evade payments. The Crown had certainly regarded customs evasion as a problem seven years earlier, when the Bristol merchant John Sharp was commissioned along with the customs officials to seize all merchandise not shipped from the Key and the Back between sunrise and sunset, the assumption being that any freight movements outside of those times and places were made with the intent of defrauding the customs.[729] A particular culprit among the customs officials appears to have been the Bristol merchant John Wyche, whose activities were to be investigated by a commission appointed in June 1441, two months after Wesynham's appointment as surveyor. These appointments were probably related to the controversies in which Wesynham's deputy water bailiff, William Tomas, alias Coffrer, had become embroiled: in 1438 he had accused Thomas Stevenys of breaking the seals affixed to forfeited goods; their dispute became violent, and two years later Tomas/Coffrer had to secure a pardon and was in the Marshalsea, charged to find sureties for his good behaviour towards Stevenys, "whom he was not to injure or procure to be injured in body by lying in wait or assault or otherwise in breach of the peace".[730]

Above all, Bristol's privileges depended on royal charters and, in extremis, what the king had granted he could also take away, as first London discovered to its cost in 1392, when its liberties were suspended and it was taken under Richard II's direct rule, and then Norwich in the 1430s and 1440s, when Henry VI twice confiscated its liberties.[731] Relations between Bristol and the Crown reached breaking point several times in the fifteenth century. The first of these points occurred at the very beginning of our period, in the course of a political crisis that, arguably, injected into the body politic

---

27-39; Olive Coleman, "The Collectors of Customs in London under Richard II", in *Studies in London History Presented to Philip Edmund Jones*, ed. A. E. J. Hollaender and W. Kellaway (London: Hodder, 1969), 181-93; *The Overseas Trade of London: Exchequer Customs Accounts, 1480-1*, ed. H. S. Cobb, London Record Society, 27 (1990), xiv-xxiv; Evan T. Jones, *Inside the Illicit Economy: Reconstructing the Smugglers' Trade of Sixteenth-Century Bristol* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 37-41.

[728] Sacks, Trade, *Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 84; *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 168. For example, *CPR, 1422-29*, 46 (appointment of Thomas Tunbrigge, yeoman of the kitchen, 1415), *CPR, 1429-36*, 332 (Thomas Wesynham, serjeant of the pantry, appointed 1434).

[729] *CPR, 1429-36*, 468.

[730] *CPR, 1436-41*, 414, 478, 519, 572.

[731] Caroline M. Barron, "Richard II's Quarrel with London", in *The Reign of Richard II*, ed. F. R. H. DuBoulay & C. M. Barron (London: Athlone Press, 1971), 173-201; Frost, "Urban Elite", 246, 249.

a virus of dynastic conflict that would not be eradicated until the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Bristol and National Politics, 1399-1499

In 1399 Henry, eldest surviving son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, was heir through the male line to the childless Richard II, who since 1397 had been acting in what his critics believed to be an increasingly despotic manner.[732] But Henry had been exiled by the king, and after his father's death in February 1399 Richard confiscate his inheritance. In June Richard left England at the head of an army in an attempt to pacify Ireland, and the following month Henry seized his opportunity and landed on the Yorkshire coast. At this point Bristol's strategic importance put it in the foreground of national politics. Both Henry and the king's party in England expected Richard to return through Wales, and Bristol s had already occupied the castle. They were led by the treasurer, William Lescrope, Earl of Wiltshire, and three king's knights and royal councillors, John Bussy, Hencontrolled the route from South Wales. A force of Richard's diminishing band of supporterry Green, and John Russell. These Ricardians hoped to establish a bridgehead at Bristol for the king's return to England. Henry moved to block any such attempt. At Berkeley he was warmly received by Thomas, Lord Berkeley, and from there they marched to Bristol, reaching it on 28 July. Here they found the castle fortified against them. The defenders were probably several hundred strong. Henry's force may have numbered in the thousands, but a concerted defence of this stronghold could have delayed him long enough for Richard's men to rally and perhaps even secure victory. This was not to be. Henry arrayed his army outside the castle, and on his behalf the constable of the realm, the Earl of Northumberland, according to the Kirkstall chronicler,

> ... had it proclaimed outside the walls of Bristol castle to all those within that anyone who wished to leave the castle and come out to where he was would be permitted to go his way without bodily harm, but that anyone who refused to do so would be beheaded.

This had its desired effect: "on hearing this, some came out to join the earl by lowering ropes from the castle walls, others through the windows, and others by the gate".[733] Wiltshire, Bussy, Green and Russell and a few of their die-hard associates found themselves left in an otherwise deserted castle with no option but to surrender. Wiltshire, Bussy and Green were tried for treason the next day and beheaded. Russell was allowed to live, on the grounds that he was insane. The pro-Lancastrian chronicler Thomas Walsingham asserted that the executions took place "amid the shouting of the commons".[734]

Walsingham's picture of a town committed to Bolingbroke, or at least bitterly opposed to his enemies, is borne out by events in January 1400. A group of Ricardian

---

[732] For the following paragraph, see *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400: The Reign of Richard II* ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 34-7, 120, 128, 133-4; and Michael Bennett, *Richard II and the Revolution of 1399* (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 159-61; Fleming, *Bristol Castle*, 18-20. For the wider context of Richard II's reign, see N. Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997). A version of this section is Fleming, "Crown and Town in Later Medieval England", 149-62.

[733] *Kirkstall Abbey Chronicles*, ed. John Taylor, Thoresby Soc., 42 (Leeds, 1952), 78

[734] *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham (1376-1422)*, trans. David Preest, ed. James G. Clark, trans. David Preest (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 308.

loyalists – the so-called Epiphany plotters - made an unsuccessful attempt to capture the new king Henry IV at Windsor on Twelfth Night and free Richard from captivity. The failure of this plot sealed Richard's fate, and he was killed the following February. One of the leaders of the conspiracy, Thomas Despencer, Earl of Gloucester, tried to flee to Cardiff, but was waylaid crossing the Bristol Channel and delivered into the custody of the mayor of Bristol, Thomas Knap. According to the Vita Ricardi Secundi:

> On the second day after this all the people gathered together and shouted out to the mayor, 'Bring out this traitor to the king and the kingdom, and let him be put to death'. Although the mayor tried hard to save him from their clutches, there was nothing he could do about it, and in the end they dragged him out to the cross which stands in the market-place and beheaded him. Then they took his head away and placed it on top of London Bridge …[735]

Henry IV is unlikely to have ordered this unlawful act directly, since there was probably not time for news and orders to have been exchanged between mayor and king, but it certainly won his approval and gratitude.

Given Bristol's previous readiness to support Richard II through loans and the provision of shipping, its savage volte face in 1399/1400 demands an explanation. While Bristol's hostility to Richard's courtiers may have been part of a general disenchantment with the royal regime, there were also local factors that probably played their part. Firstly, it is worth considering what effect the more than £3,000 in corporate or individual loans made by Bristolians to their king, may have had upon their relations with the Crown. Of course, lending on such a scale can be seen, purely and simply, as an expression of loyalty. However, while lending could have its rewards in terms of royal patronage and favours, this may not have been how it was always seen in Bristol: in 1393 a royal official seems to have returned empty handed from a visit to find lenders in the town.[736] Taxation was also a contentious issue under Richard. While the high levels and novel means of raising taxes aroused serious opposition – most famously acting as a catalyst for the Great Rebellion of 1381 – there was also suspicion that the money raised was being misused. The Commons' view was that taxation was only legitimate when it served the extraordinary needs of the Crown, these generally being defined as being linked to the conduct of warfare or high-level diplomacy, but there were accusations that Richard had been using tax revenues to fund his allegedly extravagant court: this, at least, was the allegation made by the author of Mum and the Sothsegger, in all probability a Bristolian.[737]

As a port town Bristol also contributed to the royal finances through the payment of customs, and there is evidence that Bristolians were becoming increasingly reticent to pay their dues as the reign progressed. There was a particularly intense spate of investigations into evasion in Bristol in the 1390s. Among those Bristol merchants who had goods forfeited for non-payment of customs was a serving mayor, John Barstaple.[738] The customs house itself was not free of controversy. In 1398 two Bristol merchants petitioned the Crown to enquire into the actions of John Stapleton, the king's deputy butler in the port, and the man responsible for collecting the customs

---

[735] *Chronicles of the Revolution*, ed. Given-Wilson, 238-9.

[736] Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 24, 29, 41-3. For the benefits to be derived from being a royal creditor, see L. Attreed, *The King's Towns: Identity and Survival in Late Medieval English Boroughs* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2001), 157-8, and Frost, "Urban Elite", 246-7.

[737] G. L. Harriss, "Theory and Practice in Royal Taxation: Some Observations", *EHR*, 97 (1982) 811-19, at 818. For the Bristol authorship of *Mum and the Sothsegger*, see Appendix III.

[738] *CCR, 1396-99*, 52, 504; *CPR, 1396-99*, 271, 325; *CCR, 1399-1402*, 114.

on wine. According to their allegations, Stapleton had been substituting inferior wine for shipments bound for the king, and had embezzled customs dues together with the wages of his own staff.[739]

If Richard's demands contributed to Bristol's hostile stance in 1399, this would not have been the first time in the fourteenth century that royal financial exactions pushed Bristolians into rebellion. While the great insurrection of 1312 to 1316 was much more than just a tax revolt, the imposition of a tallage played its part in estranging much of the town's population from their king and his representatives, while in 1347 another, albeit much less serious, insurrection was occasioned by Edward III's demands for ships and supplies for his French campaign.[740] Thus, there were precedents for Bristolians being prepared to defend their liberties with force and in opposition to the king, if they deemed it necessary.

Richard visited Bristol in March 1391 and March 1398. The second visit was to preside over the meeting of a parliamentary committee held in the town. This was a major event. On 14 March bailiffs and sheriffs in the surrounding counties were ordered to proclaim that all traders in the area should proceed to Bristol, "in consideration of no small resort of lords and others to Bristol while the king shall be there in person", to supply his household and to cater for "other lieges dwelling in the town and others flocking thither". Among them were John Bussy and Henry Green. While this was no doubt a boon to the town's economy, it might also have given critical Bristolians (perhaps including the author of Richard the Redeless and Mum and the Sothsegger) an opportunity to witness how their loans, taxes and customs were being mis-spent by Richard and his extravagant courtiers.[741]

Another point of contention may have related to perceived attacks on Bristol's jurisdictional independence by both the Admiralty Court and the Court of Marshalsea, on which subject Bristol petitioned parliament in the 1390s.[742] In addition, Richard's campaigns to pacify Ireland from 1397 to 1399 placed addition burdens on the port of Bristol. The ban on the export of victuals from Ireland caused disruption to what was an important element in Bristol's trade, as did the requisitioning of ships to transport armies across the Irish Sea.[743]

Richard II's personal intervention in local affairs may have caused further friction. February 1393 saw the resignation of John Excestre as master of the Hospital of St John Baptist, near St Mary Redcliffe, and his replacement by John Seint Powle, whose appointment was at the king's special request. Seynt Powle's tenure of this position lasted until 1413, but it was troubled in the extreme. In 1398 he fought off two separate attempts to replace him, and in 1404 he would be formally deposed, but he could not be budged, and it took nine years of virtual siege to get him out. The justification for his deposition in 1404 was financial mismanagement, but in the 1390s there were complaints that the Hospital sheltered Lollards. Seynt Powle's unpopularity with at least some Bristolians is revealed by a commission of February 1399 to discover the

[739] *CPR, 1396-99*, 590; TNA, SC8/213/10625.
[740]Samuel K. Cohn, Jnr., *Popular Protest in Late Medieval English Towns* (CUP, 2013), 141-3.
[741] Saul, *Richard II*, 472-3; *CCR, 1396-99*, 290; TNA, SC8/226/11253. For the parliamentary committee, and criticisms of it as subverting parliamentary privilege, see J. G. Edwards, "The Parliamentary Committee of 1398", *EHR*, 40 (1925), 321-33.
[742] TNA SC8/225/11246; *Calendar of Charter Rolls*, vol. 5, nos. 353, 1341-1417; *LRBB*, vol. 1, 173.
[743] *CPR, 1396-99*, 119, 438, 511; *CCR, 1396-99*, 327, 331.

identities of those who had assembled in great numbers and in warlike array had broken into the hospital and stolen bags containing various charters and writings.[744]

These issues may have been serious irritants, but on their own are unlikely to have driven Bristolians to bay for the blood of Richard's supporters. Chroniclers certainly portrayed the killings of Wiltshire, Bussy and Green and Gloucester as being at least popular with the masses, if not brought about by them, but the missing motivation probably lay not with the townspeople themselves but with their local magnate, Lord Thomas Berkeley. He had strong motives for desiring the removal of Gloucester and at least the neutralisation of his royal patron, and his complicity must be suspected, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

While we may be able to exonerate Mayor Knap from engineering Gloucester's lynching, it does seem that in 1399/1400 the dominant faction within Bristol's populace, if not necessarily among its elite, were murderously antagonistic towards the Ricardian regime, and at the very least willing to give Henry IV the benefit of the doubt, but these sentiments would not last.[745] However antagonistic Bristol opinion may have been towards the Ricardians, within three months of Gloucester's killing that opinion had swung wildly against the representatives of King Henry. Bristol was not alone in its swift disenchantment, since the new king was facing growing levels of criticism within a year of his usurpation. Once again, however, local factors played their part.

Relations began to sour almost immediately after Henry's coup. On 16 September - a fortnight before Henry's accession - a commission was appointed to enquire into the whereabouts of the jewels, goods and chattels of the king and his retinue, including Wiltshire, Green and Bussy, which had been left at Bristol. The fall of the castle had been followed by its sacking, and the "liberation" of its contents.[746] Similar enquiries were made in early 1400 concerning the goods of the Epiphany Plot conspirators that may have found their way to Bristol with the Earl of Gloucester. Inquisitions to determine the whereabouts of these items were not held until October 1400, when over the course of two days no less than five different juries were called to testify. The problem appears to be that the jurors repeatedly came up with the wrong answers. Each time, they found that the goods had either been passed to royal commissioners or had been spirited away by outsiders: no Bristolians were named as having been involved. The Crown was not satisfied, and a further commission of enquiry was issued in December 1402. Finally, over five years later, the sheriff of Bristol accounted at the Exchequer for these goods. The Crown's assumption that there was a conspiracy of silence within Bristol was probably correct, but its badgering of the townspeople is likely to have weakened support for the new regime.[747]

This, however, was as nothing compared to the anger aroused by the question of customs payments. On 15 September 1399 Bolingbroke granted the merchants of Bristol remission of the tunnage and poundage dues from that date on. This was stated to be in recognition of the great charges of the merchants for the defence of the realm,

---

[744] *GRBB, Text, Pt. I*, 228-30; *CPR, 1396-99*, 332, 429, 452, 510; *CPR, 1399-1401*, 291; *CPR, 1401-05*, 413; *The Register of Nicholas Bubwith, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1407-1424*, ed. T. S. Holmes, Somerset Records Society, 29-30 (1914), vol. 1, lx-lxi, 65, 107-8, 145-6, vol. 2, 318-20, 337, 455.

[745] Antipathy towards Richard, and initial approval of Henry, quickly turning to bitter disappointment, were certainly the reactions of the author of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger*, who was probably a member of the Bristol civic elite: see Appendix III.

[746] For Richard II's treasure, see http://www.history.ac.uk/richardII/index.html,.

[747] *CPR, 1396-99*, p. 596; *CPR, 1399-1401,* 312; *CPR, 1401-05*, p. 199; *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, 1399-1422*, nos. 130, 139-41, 152-3; TNA E 101/513/5; E 401/619, 13 July; E 159/177 recorda, Easter Term, r. 17d, 19v; E 159/182 recorda, Easter Term, r. 5; E 159185 recorda, Trinity Term, r. 4-4v..

which was probably a reference to their assistance in Henry's coup. Three months later King Henry had to issue a proclamation that these customs levied before 15 September had to be paid, since many merchants had refused to pay sums due from before that date.[748] The merchants' more generous interpretation of this grant seems to have rested on promises Bolingbroke had made at Knaresborough, and probably at other places, in July 1399 when, in an effort to garner support, he had announced the abolition of all taxation.[749] The Bristol merchants' resistance was matched elsewhere in the cloth-producing areas of the South West.[750]

In the spring of 1400 royal commissioners investigated Bristol merchants' evasion of the duty on cloth. This was the final straw for some. The royal official responsible for the collection of the cloth custom was the aulnager, in Bristol's case John Stodeley. According to testimony given at a judicial hearing held three weeks later, on the afternoon of Saturday 24 April a gang attacked Stodeley, who narrowly escaped death. Remarkably, the gang seems to have been largely composed of the wives of Bristol burgesses. A few hours later, when word got out that Stodeley had survived, the gang re-armed themselves, gathered further supporters, and that night marched to Christ Church, and for one hour rang the church bell, described as the "common bell", in an attempt to raise the inhabitants en masse, with the aim of seizing and beheading John Stodeley and any other royal officials they could find.[751] Their scheme was foiled by Mayor Thomas Knap who broke up the gathering, assisted by other "good men" of the town. The ringleaders were imprisoned and ejected from the freedom of Bristol. In June and July further proclamations were made insisting that cloth had to be customed and reaffirming Studeley's authority as aulnager. In February 1401 Parliament was told of this outrage, and tougher measures were requested in order to prevent any repetition. Investigation of these incidents continued until at least November 1401, but a commission of enquiry of August 1402 may also have been related to these events, and proceedings in King's Bench against the alleged perpetrators lasted until at least October 1406.[752]

Another cause of resentment probably related to the repayment of loans to the Crown. There may have been creditors still waiting for reimbursement for their loans to the previous regime, and for these, Henry's refusal to honour the debts of his predecessor would have been deeply frustrating.[753] Bristolians had responded generously to Henry's requests for loans in the first ten months of his reign. Between July 1400 and May 1401 Bristol made corporate and individual loans totalling £759 11 s. 2 d., making it the biggest source of loans to Henry IV among the provincial towns and

---

[748] *CCR*, *1399-1402*, 25.

[749] W. Mark Ormrod, "The Rebellion of Archbishop Scrope and the Tradition of Opposition to Royal Taxation", in *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (York: York Medieval Press, 2008), 162-79, at 171-2. *Mum and the Sothsegger, ll*. 147-151, seems to suggest that the promise was made in Bristol as well: see Appendix III.

[750] D. Biggs, Three Armies in *Britain: The Irish Campaign of Richard II and the Usurpation of Henry IV, 1397-99* (Leiden & Boston, 2006), 179; J. H. Wylie, *History of England under Henry the Fourth* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1884-98), vol. 1, 193-4, 198.

[751] The description of Christchurch's bell as the "common bell" suggests either that this was different from the town's curfew bell, or that at some point this function was transferred to St Nicholas's church bell.

[752] TNA KB9/191, f. 17-19, KB27/562, rex, mm. 1, 3d, 22, KB29/45 mm. 11-12, JUST 1/1549; *CPR, 1399-1401*, 272, 313, 315, 521; CCR, 1399-1402, 143, 195; *LRBB*, vol. 2, 74-5; *PROME*, Henry IV, 1401, January, 3, 457, m. 14; Wylie, *Henry the Fourth*, vol. 1, 120; *The Chronicle of Adam Usk*, *1377-1421*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 130-31.

[753] Liddy, War, *Politics and Finance*, 24-57; Anthony Steel, *The Receipt of the Exchequer, 1377-1485* (Cambridge: CUP, 1954), 144-5. TNA E401/619-57 *passim*; *CFR, 1399-1405*, 319.

cities. While some of these loans were promptly repaid from the Bristol customs, it is not clear if all royal creditors were fully satisfied. The extent to which royal loans were freely given, and thus to be interpreted as indicators of support for the king, or induced in some way, and therefore possible causes of irritation with the regime, is once again impossible to fathom. If the former interpretation applies, then the continuation of lending into 1401, including the corporate loan of £333 6s. 8d. in March of that year, suggests that the civic elite were still well-disposed, despite the frictions of the previous eighteen months. If the latter, then Crown pressure to lend such large sums could only have exacerbated any feelings of resentment. In any case, a change in the elite's attitude to Henry is suggested by the fact that Bristol's loans to Henry IV dried up after May 1401, despite the appointment in September 1405 of a commission to raise a loan from Bristol.[754] These financial pressures came on top of heavy regular taxation. There were four lay subsidies granted between 1401 and 1405, despite Henry Bolingbroke's promise not to resort to this expedient. This taxation added to the general levels of disenchantment with the new regime.[755]

Events in Bristol between July 1399 and January 1400 played an important part in the success of Henry IV, both in terms of ensuring his successful usurpation and in foiling Ricardian attempts to unseat him. As far as we can tell, Henry was swept to power on a wave of popular support; and yet, that enthusiasm was fast dissipating within a year of his usurpation. While the support of some Bristolians for Bolingbroke in July 1399, and their participation in the murder of the Despenser Earl of Gloucester six months later, may have been prompted by Lord Berkeley, the uprising of April 1400 shows that there were at least some within the town who could act independently of Berkeley influence, and in violent opposition to royal policy, when they felt their financial interests were under threat.

Another cause of friction between the early Lancastrian regime and some Bristolians was the later medieval English heresy of Lollardy, inspired by the teaching of the Oxford academic John Wycliff. Bristol was frequently associated with Lollards in the 1390s and early 1400s, and trials of Bristolians accused of Lollardy or other related heretical beliefs and practices (particularly from south of the Avon, in the Bath and Wells Diocese) are found into the later fifteenth century. The extent to which those accused of "Lollardy" by the spiritual and temporal authorities were always and necessarily consciously following Wycliffite teachings or, indeed, were in any sense "heretics" at all, is the subject of much debate, with which it would be inappropriate to engage here, but there does at least seem to be a strong likelihood that fifteenth-century Bristol was regarded as a particular problem.[756] In 1414 the Lancastrian regime

[754] Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance*, 24-57; Steel, *Receipt of the Exchequer*, 144-5. TNA E401/619-57 passim; *CFR*, 1399-1405, 319.

[755] E. Wright, "Henry IV, the Commons and the Recovery of Royal Finance in 1407", in *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England*, ed. Rowena E. Archer and Simon Walker (London and Rio Grande: Hambledon, 1995), 65-81, at 66; Bennett, "Henry of Bolingbrooke and the Revolution of 1399", in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (Woodbridge: Boydell/York Medieval Press, 2003), 9-34, at 27; Jenni Nuttall, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature, Language and Politics in Late Medieval England* (CUP, 2007), 76-9.

[756] *Register of Nicholas Bubwith*, ed. Holmes, vol. 1, lxvii-lxxi; J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (OUP, 1965), 20-51; K. B. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity* (London: English Universities Press, 1952), 127, 154-5, 176; Joseph Bettey, *Morning Stars of the Reformation: Early Religious Reformers in the Bristol Region*, ALHA Books, no. 8 (Bristol: Avon Local History and Archaeology, 2011); but see C. Burgess, "A Hotbed of Heresy? Fifteenth-Century Bristol and Lollardy Reconsidered", in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion* ed. L. Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 43-62, for an alternative view. The author of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the*

prosecuted a number of people for allegedly taking part in a rebellion just outside London in which Lollardy was supposed to have played a major part, and contemporaries associated this putative rebellion with Sir John Oldcastle. That this reference to what is traditionally referred to as the "Oldcastle Rebellion" has to be so circumlocutory is the result of doubts cast on the traditional interpretation of these events as a major Lollard uprising instigated and led by Oldcastle by Professor Paul Strohm, who suggests that the rebellion as such did not happen, but was rather the product of what might crudely be called the Lancastrian "propaganda machine". Whatever the event's true nature, the Crown prosecuted a number of alleged participants, who were variously accused of heresy and/or rebellion, and in the extant indictments the greatest number of accused from any one place came from Bristol, which provided 29 indicted rebels, as against 16 each from Leicestershire and London, the next most prodigious suppliers.[757] Presumably most if not all of those found guilty and punished had been involved in some sort of subversive activity, but the doubts surrounding the true nature of this activity, coupled with the fact that most were punished for treason rather than heresy, makes it impossible to know what, exactly, they were protesting about and what their aims actually were. Lollard beliefs are likely to have inspired some, but were probably not the sole motivation, and the complaints of the 'rebels' may well have extended to a broader critique of the Lancastrian regime. What can be said with certainty is that while there were Lollard sympathisers within Bristol's broad elite, the Bristolians indicted in 1414 were mainly drawn from the artisan and small craftsman class, in other words from the socio-economic group usually associated with heretical beliefs in the fifteenth century, but with some clerical leadership. As such, they provide a further illustration of the point, already made with reference to events in 1399/1400, that political engagement in early fifteenth-century Bristol was not the sole preserve of its elites. Given that it was these elites who monopolised the means of recording their views for posterity, it tends to be only at times of violent disjuncture that the political opinions of the masses are recorded, and then only for the purposes of vilifying and suppressing them, so that a genuinely popular (that is to say, non-elite) oppositional political culture is difficult to reconstruct. However, these fleeting indications do demonstrate that it existed in Bristol, as elsewhere.[758]

Oldcastle's Rebellion came near the beginning of the short reign of Henry V; during the remaining eight years of his life the king oversaw the English conquest of Normandy and through the treaty of Troyes brought the French king to agree to disinherit his own son in favour of the offspring of Henry's marriage to Princess Katherine. English fortunes in France reached their apogee in the 1420s; from the end of that decade France gradually slipped from their grasp. Bristol's merchants and seamen

---

Sothsegger expressed views that, while not necessarily heretical *per se*, were in line with certain Lollard opinions: see Appendix III.

[757] Paul Strohm, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation, 1399-1422* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1998), 65-86. Those prosecuted for participating in the rebellion have been discussed by Edward Powell, *Kingship, Law and Society: Criminal Justice in the Reign of Henry V* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 141-67. For Oldcastle, see John A. F. Thomson, "Oldcastle, John, Baron Cobham (d. 1417)", *ODNB* [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20674, accessed 1/01/13]. The Bristol commission of investigation, dated 11 January 1411, the day after the alleged rebellion was supposedly foiled, is *CPR, 1413-16*, 177.

[758] For fifteenth-century popular politics see I. M. W. Harvey, "Was there Popular Politics in Fifteenth-Century England?", in *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society*, ed. R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), 155-74.

played their part in efforts to maintain English Gascony. Bristol ships supplied Bordeaux and Bayonne with victuals in the first decade of the fifteenth century when the towns were threatened by French and Castilian forces, while Bristol continued to provide ships to supply Gascony and Normandy during the period of Henry V's conquests from 1417 to 1420.[759] In the 1420s and 1430s the town's interests in Ireland were also reflected in its supply of shipping for the transport of men and supplies across the Irish sea.[760] Bristol provided shipping for Normandy and Gascony into the 1440s, while Bristol merchants also accompanied expeditions to Ireland and France, probably as victuallers and suppliers of clothing and equipment.[761] In addition, Bristol's importance as a royal creditor continued, with at least £666 13s. 4d. lent towards the Normandy campaign of 1417, £200 lent in the early 1430s, £160 in 1447, and £150 in 1452.[762]

Bristol's contribution to the royal fleets was recognised in 1446, when the town was allowed to exercise its own admiralty jurisdiction, in consideration of both the shipping services provided in the past, and payment of the sum of £200. The jurisdiction of the High Admiral over Bristol shipping and sailors had been a bone of contention under Richard II, and was generally resented throughout the realm as being incompetently exercised whilst at the same time tending to impinge on existing jurisdictions.[763]

After 1447 the English position in France collapsed, and Bristol's contributed to an increasingly desperate and poorly co-ordinated effort to shore up a doomed position.[764] In August and September 1453 letters were sent under the king's privy seal to the mayor, sheriffs and bailiffs of Bristol ordering them to proclaim that all masters and mariners should assemble their ships to help lift the Franco-Breton-Castilian blockade of the Gironde. Perhaps it is a sign of the Crown's desperation, if not its subjects' lack of enthusiasm for the ill-fated venture, that the letters are unusually explicit about the perilous situation:

> …for asmoche as we be credibly auertaygned that our saide ennemes and naimly of the parties of Brytaigne and Spayne haue ordeygned and sette to the see a greet numbre of shippis and menof werre to thentente to forbarre and lette our saide armee of thaire purpose and goyng into our saide duchie by the whiche if thay so sholde doo that god forbede to greet an hurte and inconveniente might and were like to ensue to the same our duchie and subgittis there.. [765]

[759] TNA SC8/229/11442, 304/15193; *CPR*, 1416-22, 85, 275, 319-20.
[760] *CPR, 1422-29*, 327, 493, *CPR, 1429-36*, 153.
[761] Ships: *CPR, 1441-46*, 79, 156; victuallers and suppliers: *CPR, 1416-22*, 51, 278, *CPR, 1422-29*, 321, 1429-36, 330, *CPR, 1441-46*, 114, 432, 444, *CPR, 1446-52*, 6.
[762] *CPR, 1416-22*, 111, *CPR, 1429-36*, 466; Lee, « Political Communication », 38-9.
[763] *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 71-2, 122-7; Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 33-4. In 1415 a commission of oyer et terminer was issued in response to the appeal by Richard Godechylde of Bristol against a judgement made in the Admiralty court which found against him as defendant in a case brought by Richard Burwell, regarding payment of £48 for four pipes of woad: *CPR, 1413-16*, 366. Despite the grant of 1446, appeals by Bristolians against judgements in the Admiralty court continued, including that brought in 1448 by Thomas Devenyssh, who alleged that his arrest, on the orders of the Admiralty, had occurred outside of its jurisdiction: *CPR, 1446-52*, 142.
[764] *CPR, 1446-52*, 437, 579; TNA, C1/19/409; Carus-Wilson, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol', 210-11.
[765] TNA, E28/83/57; see also E28/83/45, 55; Malcolm Vale, *English Gascony, 1399-1453: A Study of War, Government and Politics During the Later Stages of the Hundred Years' War* (OUP, 1970), 152.

Bristolians could have been in no doubt about the nature and extent of the catastrophe.

To what extent, if any, the loss of France contributed to the waning of confidence in Henry VI's government is a contentious question, and impossible to answer definitively, but that civil war broke out within two years of the calamity is surely suggestive. Bristol's position within the seigniorial geography of mid fifteenth-century England made political involvement inescapable as the nation slid into civil war in the 1450s.

Opposition to Henry VI's regime was led by Richard, Duke of York, the next male heir to the throne between the death of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester in 1447 and the birth of Edward, Prince of Wales to Henry and Queen Margaret in 1453. In the early 1450s Richard, Duke of York had considerable influence in Bristol.[766] In June 1451 the Duke of York's steward of Easton-in-Gordano, Thomas Yonge, half-brother of William Canynges, with whom he was sitting in parliament for Bristol, sponsored a petition that the Duke be recognised as heir presumptive to the childless king.[767] He was almost certainly doing so with at least the acquiescence of the dominant faction within the Bristol elite. His actions would not have pleased Warwick, who would not ally himself with York in opposition to Henry's court party until 1454, and the king rewarded Yonge for his presumption with the first of his two spells in the Tower.[768] Yonge was very much York's man: steward of Easton-in-Gordano since 1447, one of the Duke's attorneys while he was lieutenant in Ireland, and feoffee to York's leading councillor, Sir William Oldhall. Yonge's half brother William Canynges shared his association with York, as did their father-in-law, John Burton, who was mayor at the time of Yonge's petition, the three men acting as the Duke's feoffees for Easton from at least 1448 to 1450.[769]

Evidence for the Bristol elite's sympathy for York in the first half of the 1450s is indirect but suggestive. Bristol may have been implicated in York's disastrous march on Dartford in March 1452. The Duke sent a letter to Bristol in February to galvanise support; while the text has not survived, it was probably similar to that of a letter sent to Shewsbury at the same time, which criticised Henry's chief councillor, the Duke of Somerset, for the loss of Gascony and Guienne, and for allowing Calais to be threatened, resulting in "derogation, loss of merchandise [and] lesion of honour". Such accusations would have struck a chord with Bristol merchants watching the collapse of their

---

[766] The events of c. 1450-71 in Bristol are treated in greater detail in Peter Fleming, "Politics and the Provincial Town: Bristol, 1451-1471", in *People, Places and Perspectives: Essays on Later Medieval and Early Tudor England*, ed. Keith Dockray and Peter Fleming (Stroud: Nonsuch, 2005), 79-114.

[767] P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York, 1411-1460* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 63, 73, 98-100, 241; Griffiths, Henry V 671, 674, 692, 704, n. 61, 748; *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Wars of the English in France during the Reign of Henry VI*, ed. J. Stevenson (RS, 1864), vol. 2, 770; Eric W. Ives, *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983), 480; Josiah C. Wedgwood and A. D. Holt, *History of Parliament: Biographies of the Members of the Commons House, 1439-1509* (London: HMSO, 1936), 981-2; J.T. Driver, "Parliamentary Burgesses for Bristol and Gloucestershire, 1422-1437", *TBGAS*, 74 (1955), 113-21; A. F. Pollard, "Yonge, Sir Thomas (c.1405-1477)", rev. N. Ramsay, *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30230 [accessed 01/01/13]).

[768] Anthony J. Pollard, *Warwick the Kingmaker: Politics, Power and Fame* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007), 22-3. Yonge was released in April 1452, the beneficiary of a general pardon, and claimed redress in parliament for his arrest and damages, apparently unsuccessfully: Pollard, "Yonge, Sir Thomas (c.1405-1477)".

[769] BL E326/1244. Yonge had also been steward of the Earl's Court in 1443-44, which suggests that at the time he was a client of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester: BL Egerton Roll 8356. I am grateful to Rosemary Reeves and Dr Simon Payling for their help with Yonge. For Burton, see Woodger, Roskell, "Burton, John II (d. 1455), of Redcliffe Street, Bristol".

commercial empire in Gascony.[770] A general pardon was promulgated on 7 April 1452, covering those who had participated in York's Dartford debacle. The mayor and common council of Bristol bought a pardon in May, as did thirteen other Bristolians between April and October, including William Canynges and Thomas Yonge, strongly suggesting that they felt vulnerable to accusations of complicity.[771] However, the powerful commission of oyer et terminer that toured the West Country in July and August, accompanied by the king himself, passed through Bristol but appears not to have held sessions there, implying that the loyalty of the town's population as a whole was not regarded as a serious problem.[772]

Henry's mental collapse in August 1453, probably triggered by shock at the loss of Normandy and Gascony, revived York's fortunes, and he was appointed Protector and Defender of the realm the following April.[773] His exercise of patronage seems to have reached as far as the Bristol customs house. Changing patterns in the appointment of customs officials, as among the very few directly-appointed Crown officials in Bristol, show a definite relationship to shifts in the balance of power at the heart of government, reflecting the comings and goings of patronage brokers and their clients, and as such are worth discussing in some detail. Between 1453 and 1471 there were, on average, five appointments to the Bristol customs administration each year. In 1454 there were twice this number; only two of these appointments preceded York's elevation to Protector, while of the remaining eight four occurred in April and May, within the two months following his formal appointment. Of these eight appointees only three had held office in the Bristol customs administration in the preceding twelve months. One of the new appointments was Robert Strangeways, son of Sir James Strangeways, and a northerner who would appear as a prominent Warwick retainer in 1470. Of those appointed to the Bristol customs house during York's first protectorate only two, John Yonge and John Wyche, were reappointed between the protectorate's end in February 1455 and York's return to power after the first battle of St Albans on 22 May 1455. In 1455 there were nine appointments to the town's customs administration, four of them in February and March, soon after the end of York's first protectorate, and four more in June, following the establishment of York's second protectorate after St Albans. Of these latter four appointees, Richard Alberton and Richard Haddon had been Bristol customers during the first protectorate but not in the intervening period, while the other two were new to the customs house.

York's second protectorate was formally dissolved on 25 February 1456, and in August the Lancastrians, with Queen Margaret now taking a leading role, reasserted their control, signalled by the court's virtual relocation to the West Midlands, particularly Kenilworth and Coventry. October saw a thorough reorganisation of Bristol's customs administration, with six out of the seven appointments in 1456 made in that single month; of these only one, John Wyche, had served during either of York's protectorates. Between 1453 and 1459, about half of those appointed to the Bristol customs administration outside of York's two protectorates served at least once more, but of the ten men appointed under the protectorates, only three, Strangeways, Yonge

[770] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 1*, 136; *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, ed. N. H. Nicolas (Record Commission, 1837), vol. 6, 90-2.
[771] *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 127-32; TNA C67/40 passim for pardons; Robin L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (2nd edn, Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 101-2.
[772] Storey, *End of the House of Lancaster*, 96-7; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 698, 711 n. 146.
[773] For Henry's collapse and York's first protectorate, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 715-38.

and Wyche, were re-appointed under the Lancastrians.[774] The link between changes in personnel at the customs house and shifts in the balance of power at the very highest levels of government need not necessarily mean that the former was heavily politicised, merely that new patronage brokers introduced new local clients; however, as we shall see, there are indications that the Bristol customs administration would soon be reflecting factional politics in the town, and it is probably the case that in the 1450s members of the customs administration were, at the very least, providing intelligence on the town's political allegiances for their patrons.

Bristol's elite showed no diminution in their support for the military effort under York's first protectorate. In July 1454 Worcestre wrote to the Norfolk esquire John Paston that "…a stately vessel, only for the warre, ys made new at Brystowe by the Mayr, called Sturmyn [Robert Sturmy]. And the seyd toune with the west coosts wolle do her part, and they may be supported or favoured".[775] The previous month Sturmy and Thomas Yonge had been among the collectors of a loan of £150 made by Bristol towards the costs of transporting an army to Calais, to which the town also contributed a force of archers.[776]

However, a curious King's Bench case from 1454 suggests that by then Bristol had acquired a reputation for hostility to the Lancastrians. A Southwark yeoman, John Owden, alias Chamber, sentenced to hang for a felony, attempted to save his neck by turning approver and accusing others of a capital offence. Owden's chosen victims were eleven Bristol burgesses, of whom four were accused of plotting treason with the French, two of defrauding the Bristol customs, and five of using books of necromancy and sorcery to bring about King Henry's mental collapse. The accused included past and future bailiffs, sheriffs and mayors. Investigations into Owden's story soon revealed it to be fantasy, and he was executed, but he is unlikely to have come up with this list of eleven prominent Bristolians unaided, while the choice of Bristol as the setting for this tale may have been thought to increase its credibility.[777]

During the 1456-7 mayoralty of William Canynges, with the Lancastrians once more in the ascendant nationally, Margaret appears to have visited Bristol, "with manie Nobles and gentlemen". Given the Yorkist sympathies of the mayor, her presence in the town is unlikely to have been a social call. A flurry of pardons purchased by Bristolians in January 1458 may have been in response to her visit. Twenty-two Bristolians procured individual pardons, along with the mayor and common council, who also purchased a general pardon; among those individuals pardoned in January were Robert Sturmy, William Canynges and Thomas Yonge. In addition, in what appears to have been a highly unusual form of double insurance, a separate pardon was purchased in March by the burgesses acting as a body.[778]

---

[774] Dates of appointment of customs officials are taken from *CPR* & *CFR*, *passim*. For Strangways, see also Michael Hicks, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence: George, Duke of Clarence, 1449-78* (revised edn., Bangor: Headstart History, 1992), 53; idem, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 286. For York's second protectorate and the Lancastrian reaction, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 772-5.

[775] Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century, ed. N. Davis, vol. 2 (OUP, 1976), 95; *The Paston Letters*, ed. J. Gairdner, vol. 2 (London, 1904), 324 & nn. 2-3. York would be among the backers of Sturmy's ill-fated 1457 Mediterranean expedition, but so would the Lancastrian John, Lord Stourton.

[776] *CPR, 1452-61*, 147-8, 156, 163-4. The loan was raised in April/May 1454, to be paid into the Exchequer by 20 June, repayable from the customs: *PROME*, Henry VI, 1453, March, v-245.

[777] TNA KB9/273 m 2; KB27/776 rex m 4^{d}; Anthony Gross, *The Dissolution of the Lancastrian Kingship* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1996), 21-2. I am grateful to Dr Hannes Kleineke for his advice on approvers.

[778] A. E. Hudd, "Two Bristol Calendars", *TBGAS*, 19 (1894-5), 105-41, at 124; TNA C67/42 passim.

In October 1459 York and his Neville allies the earls of Salisbury and Warwick made a stand at Ludford, near Ludlow, but their troops melted away in the face of a royal army, and the Yorkist leadership was forced into exile: York and his second son the Earl of Rutland fled to Ireland, while his eldest son Edward, Earl of March and the Nevilles found refuge in Calais.[779] Ludford had been a setback, but not a decisive defeat, and they used this period of exile to regroup and prepare for their return.

The evidence presented thus far strongly suggests that the dominant faction within Bristol's elite was already sympathetic to the York and the Nevilles by this point. With the Lancastrian court based in Coventry and Kenilworth, and the Yorkists in Ireland and Calais Bristol, at the nexus of routes from Ireland, Wales, the South West and the West Midlands, now occupied a crucial strategic position. The town controlled two possible approaches to London: York's from a landing in south Wales (although Bristol itself might have given York a suitable bridgehead), and the route from a landing in the South West, which could conceivably have been made by either York or the Nevilles. In addition, if Bristol were held by the Yorkists it might provide a base from which communications between the Lancastrians in the West Midlands and London could be threatened. Thus, it made good strategic sense for the Yorkists to cultivate their Bristol support. This would have to have been done covertly, and hence direct evidence for any such activity is missing.

While Yorkists may have been in the ascendancy, Bristol's elite was still split along factional lines. In January 1460 John Borough, or Burgh, yeoman of the crown, gauger and water bailiff in the port of Bristol from 1456 to 1457, was rewarded by the Lancastrians for his good service against the rebellious Yorkists.[780] On the other hand, the following month another episode in the eventful life of Thomas Yonge provides a possible indication of Yorkist activity in the town. Yonge was accused of treason by a priest, John Boswell, and consequently spent his second spell in the Tower while under investigation. He was released on bail in March, but he was not pardoned, and the case dropped, until November, by which time the Yorkists had seized power.[781] Whatever the precise nature of that accusation, it is likely to have involved communications with the Yorkist lords in exile, and it is also likely to have been true.

The Nevilles and March landed in Kent in June 1460, and on 2 July London opened its gates to them. The Yorkists then defeated a Lancastrian force at Northampton on 10 July and captured Henry VI, through whom they proceeded to rule, using him as a puppet king.[782] Later that month preparations began to bring York back from Ireland. This involved seizing ships in west-coast ports, including Bristol. The masters of the Marie of Bayonne and the Marie of La Rochelle, which had both been seized while they were moored in Bristol, later petitioned Chancery, claiming that the seizure had occurred in contravention of safe conducts that Warwick had issued to them, and with the connivance of the mayor, Thomas Roger, sheriff, Robert Jakes, and other Bristol burgesses. While they denied the accusation, it is likely that the ships' masters resisted those sent to seize their ships, allegedly killing one of them with cannon fire.[783]

---

[779] Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 822.
[780] *CFR, 1461-71*, 4-5, 7.
[781] TNA C67/45, m. 7; *CCR, 1454-61*, 419-20, *CCR, 1461-68*, 150.
[782] This paragraph is based on Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 859-75.
[783] *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous*, vol. 8, 162-3. The accusation and subsequent enquiry is discussed in more detail in Fleming, "Politics and the Provincial Town", 86-7.

From July the Yorkists instigated a cull of Bristol's customs officials: of the sixteen who had been appointed by the Lancastrians after the end of York's second protectorate, only one, the Neville retainer Robert Strangeways, was reappointed.[784] In August the mayor and common council were commissioned to suppress riots and disturbances. While no further details are given in the commission, it is likely that these were motivated by factionalism.[785] Lancastrian sympathies persisted in Bristol.

In September, the same month that York finally crossed the sea from Ireland, the Lancastrian Duke of Somerset landed in the South West, and joined with the Earl of Devon to raise troops.[786] They were to rendezvous with a large Lancastrian army mustering at Kingston-upon-Hull. They started north in December, passing through Bath, Cirencester, Evesham and thence to Coventry, but avoiding Bristol, the obvious gateway to the Severn Valley route to the West Midlands. They were probably deterred by a show of strength and a discharge of cannon from Bristol castle, which had apparently been rested from Lancastrian control by Mayor William Canynges on York's orders. Canynges also seems to have seized a consignment of two thousand pounds of gunpowder, saltpetre and sulphur from Henry May, a Bristol burgess of Irish origin, who was intending to supply it, along with quantities of wheat, to James Butler, or Ormond, Earl of Wiltshire. The Earl of Wiltshire held manors in Wiltshire and Somerset but came of a major Anglo-Irish family.[787] He evidently accompanied Somerset and Devon on their march north.[788] A further dimension to the December 1460 conspiracy is suggested by allegations made against Sir Baldwin Fulford in his treason trial at Bristol in September 1461.[789] Fulford had been sheriff of Devon, and was a mainstay of Lancastrian resistance in the South-West. He was found to have plotted York's death with two Bristol yeomen in the same month that the Lancastrian army passed close by, a circumstance that prompts speculation that Fulford and May were involved in the same plot.

York was in fact killed in December 1460, but not as the result of plots laid in Bristol. He was killed in battle at Wakefield, and Salisbury was executed the following day. The following month Margaret and the Lancastrian army – composed largely of northerners and Scots – marched south. Edward, Earl of March, but now also Duke of York, had been despatched to Wales to suppress the Lancastrian threat in the far west. At Mortimer's Cross, near Ludlow, on 2 or 3 February, he defeated the earls of Wiltshire and Pembroke. His success was not matched by the Earl of Warwick. On 17 February his army was vanquished by Margaret's at the second battle of St Alban's. Warwick rode

---

[784] *CFR, 1461-71*, 4-5, 7, 70-2, 146, 148, 198, 200.

[785] *CPR, 1452-61*, 517, 608.

[786] Unless otherwise stated, the following paragraph is based on: *GRBB*, *Text, Part 4*, 136-8; Cora L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward IV* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1923), vol. 1, 117; *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Wars of the English in France During the Reign of Henry the Sixth, King of England*, ed. Joseph Stevenson, 2 vols. in 3 (RS, 1864) II, 774-5; Michael K. Jones, "Beaufort, Henry, Second Duke of Somerset (1436-1464)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1860 [accessed 02/01/13]).

[787] John Watts, "Butler, James, First Earl of Wiltshire and Fifth Earl of Ormond (1420-1461)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4188 [accessed 02/01/13]); TNA C140/3/29, mm 6, 18; Michael Hicks, "The Career of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, 1449-1478" (unpublished University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1975), 258-62.

[788] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 4*, 136-8; Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward IV*, vol. 1, 117, 178-9, 187-8, 193-4; *Letters and Papers*, ed. Stevenson, II, 774-5; Jones, "Beaufort, Henry, second Duke of Somerset". The episode is discussed in more detail in Fleming, "Politics and the Provincial Town", 87-8.

[789] TNA KB 9/297 mm. 134-5.

westwards, looking to rendezvous with Edward, as the victorious Lancastrians set off on the day's journey from St Alban's to London. As soon as Edward heard about the defeat at St Alban's he set off for London. Three days later he met Warwick and his men in Oxfordshire. Bristol seems to have sent a detachment of sixty men to join Edward's force as it passed through the West Country (he had been ordered to levy men in this region on 12 February), at a cost to the town of £160.[790] Coventry certainly supplied men to Edward on this occasion, and according to a later, admittedly Yorkist chronicler, the two towns were jointly threatened by Margaret during the St Alban's campaign:

> the quene with her counsell had graunted and yeve leve to the northurmen forto spoyle and robbe ... the townes of Couentre, Brystow, and Salesbury wyth the shyrys withynne rehersed, as for payment and recompense of theyre sowde and wages, as the comon noyse was among the peple at that tyme ...[791]

Salisbury may have been targeted because it was from here that Warwick's father, the elder Richard Neville, took the title of his earldom (but if so, why was the town of Warwick not similarly threatened?). Coventry would have been a particular object of Margaret's venom since it had rejected a Lancastrian advance guard sent out immediately after the second battle of St Albans.[792]

Meanwhile, the Lancastrians found that the Londoners would not allow them entry or assistance, and so most of the force fell back to nearby Dunstable, reaching it on 19 February. Edward and Warwick entered London on 27 February, unopposed. With the Yorkists ensconced in the capital, the Lancastrian leadership felt they had no option but to retire northwards, ceding the south of England and much of Wales to their enemies. With Bristol and Coventry both declaring for York, there was no refuge in the south-west Midlands for the Lancastrian army. Retreat northwards may have been their only remaining course of action, but by handing the richest part of the realm to their enemies this move effectively sealed the Lancastrians' fate. Had Bristol and Coventry held for Lancaster, thereby providing an alternative southern power-base to the disloyal capital, the political history of later fifteenth-century England might have been very different.

Edward was crowned King Edward IV on 4 March and left London nine days later at the head of a hastily assembled army to confront the retreating Lancastrians. They clashed on 29 March at Towton in Yorkshire, where he inflicted a devastating defeat. Edward's army included a Bristol contingent.[793]

The Duke of Somerset was once more a threatening presence in the Bristol region soon after Edward's accession in March 1461, when the king repeated his father's command to the mayor and common council to hold the castle against the

---

[790] A 1463 petition to Warwick claims that at Edward's command Bristol had supplied, at some unspecified time in the recent past, 60 men for 2 months at a cost of £160, and this seems to have been a separate, and earlier, force to that supplied for the Towton campaign in March: *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 77.

[791] *An English Chronicle, 1377-1461*: *A New Edition*, ed. William Marx (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 98; *An English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI*, ed. J.S. Davies, Camden Society, 64 (1856), 109; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 882, n. 96.

[792] Peter Fleming, *Coventry and the Wars of the Roses*, Dugdale Soc. Occasional Paper, 50 (Dugdale soc./Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 2011), 12-17.

[793] The 1463 petition to Warwick claims that Bristol had supplied a force sent to the north (*GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 77-8); the assumption that this latter referred to Towton is supported by the claim made in a contemporary poem on the battle that, 'Þe white ship of Bristow he feryd not þat fray': *Historical Poems of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. R. H. Robbins (New York: Columbia UP, 1959), 172. A man who joined Edward's army at this time was consequently in arrears with his rent: BRO P/StE/ChW 1, f. 38^{v}.

Duke.[794] As in December, the proximity of a Lancastrian force seems to have stirred up conspiracies within the town. Another of the charges on which Fulford was convicted in September 1461 was that on 10 March he had tried to instigate an armed uprising among Bristol yeomen. Tried alongside Fulford was John Heysaunt, a Bristol customs collector removed from office after July 1460, who was found to have plotted against Edward IV at Bristol in July 1461 with a Breton, Nicholas Dolphyn, and other enemies of the realm.[795]

Though tried together, Fulford and Heysaunt were convicted of separate acts of treason, but there may have been a connection between them. In February 1460 £200 was allocated to support Fulford's naval operations against the Yorkists, and the money was to be paid from the Bristol subsidy collected by Heysaunt and Robert Strangeways: it would have made sense for Fulford to have established a presence in Bristol to ensure payment, and Heysaunt (but not the Neville retainer Strangeways) could have been his contact.[796] Heysaunt's Breton connection, assuming it to have been real, might have been made either in his capacity as a customs official or through Fulford's activities in the Channel.

After his execution, Heysaunt's head was stuck above Newgate, in full view of passers-by, in order to strike terror into the hearts of any delinquents tempted to resist the new king.[797] Lancastrian loyalists do not seem to have been found among the leaders of Bristol's political society: neither Heysaunt nor Henry May were within the inner circle of common councillors, while Fulford was an outsider, and his handful of Bristol yeomen accomplices could not have been much of a threat to the Yorkist establishment.

Bristol's 1463 petition to the Earl of Warwick listed the town's contributions to the Yorkist regime up to that point: in addition to the men provided in February and March 1461, on two occasions the town had supplied ships to campaigns against Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke and other Lancastrians in Wales, as well as to transport ambassadors to Castile, the three naval contributions together costing over a thousand pounds, and it had also responded to Edward's request for a loan with £200, as yet unpaid.[798] This sum appears to have been a corporate loan, and different from loans made to Edward in 1461 by Thomas Yonge (three, of £150, £116 13s. 4d., and £66 13s. 4d.), William Canynges (£333 6s. 8d.) and St Augustine's Abbey (over £23).[799] The total amounts lent by Yonge and Canynges exceed any loans made by individuals outside London or Calais for the whole ten years from 1452 to 1462.[800] These private loans, together with the corporate loan claimed in the 1463 petition, amount to a sum of

---

[794] TNA C1/29/542.

[795] TNA KB 9/297 mm. 134-5. Heysaunt's appointment as collector was made in February 1457 (*CFR*, 1452-61, 171, 169-70), and renewed in November 1459 (ibid., 255, 257); he was still accounting as collector on 1 March 1460 (TNA E401/869), but by 5 December he was described as late collector: TNA E401/875. Bretons fought for the Lancastrians at Mortimer's Cross, possibly recruited by Wiltshire: *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles*, ed. J. Gairdner, Camden Society, new series, 28 (1880), 76-7; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 871.

[796] TNA E401/868, m. 12. For Fulford's attempt to intercept Warwick at sea in the spring of 1460, see Colin F. Richmond, "The Earl of Warwick's Domination of the Channel and the Naval Dimension to the Wars of the Roses", *Southern History*, 18 (1996), 1-19, at 12-13.

[797] TNA KB 9/297 m. 134.

[798] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 1*, p.137, *Part 3*, 77-8. Bristol supplied ships towards the Welsh campaigns in September 1461 and March 1462: *CPR, 1461-67*, 100; "Overseas Trade of Bristol", ed. Carus-Wilson, 126. The Spanish embassy occurred in October 1462: Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. 1, 261, 279.

[799]TNA E401/877, E404/72/1 no 83.

[800] Steel, *Receipt of the Exchequer*, 348-9.

around £890, and while this is dwarfed by the loans made by London to the Yorkists, it far exceeds the total of recorded loans made by Exeter, Norwich, Nottingham or York in any one year between 1378 and 1482.[801] That Canynges and Yonge lent money to the new Yorkist regime is hardly surprising, and while Abbot Walter Newbury's support is perhaps less predictable, that given by the town as a whole, in the shape of ships, men and money, while generous, is in keeping with its record of provision made to royal military and naval efforts. However, when put alongside the evidence already adduced of pro-Yorkist sentiment in Bristol, this looks like further confirmation of the town's dominant political affiliation during the establishment of the Edwardian kingship.

Other evidence also supports this interpretation. In July 1462 John Brown of Bristol was given the office of customer of Cork, Youghal and Kinsale for life, in recognition of the good service he had given to Edward and his father, the Duke of York.[802] Another Bristolian, John Galgey, had been accused of treason against Henry VI, and the case was still active after 1461, when his surety, a fuller from Dursley, was pardoned after the accused failed to appear.[803] In September 1460, meanwhile, a Bristol mariner, William Wadyner, made a gift of all his goods to the Earl of Warwick.[804]

At the same time, dynastic loyalties hardened into antagonistic factions only once it was clear that the modus vivendi had broken down irreconcilably. There are several instances of men who within months would emerge as political enemies conducting business with each other, apparently quite amicably. For example, in May 1460 William Canynges was associated with John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury and Thomas Heysaunt, gentleman of Bristol, in acknowledging John Heysaunt's gift of all his goods to the earl: this was the same John Heysaunt who was alleged to have been plotting against the Yorkists two months later and who Canynges would help condemn to a traitor's death in September 1461.[805] Among the witnesses to Henry May's gift of all his goods to the Earl of Wiltshire in 1455 were John Yonge and John Brown, and probably identical with Thomas Yonge's brother and the John Brown who would be rewarded for his service to York and Edward IV in 1462.[806] From the late 1440s until January 1461 Thomas Yonge himself appeared regularly as a party to legal documents alongside Chief Justice Sir John Fortescue, the Lancastrian's leading intellectual supporter and propagandist.[807] Fortescue came from a Devon family, was married to Isabel, daughter of John James of Norton St Philip near Bath, and had extensive properties in the West Country, so it is perhaps not surprising that he and Yonge, the slightly less prominent lawyer, should have been well acquainted with each other, but their relationship clearly went beyond

---

[801] Barron, "London and the Crown, 1451-61", in *The Crown and Local Communities in England and France in the Fifteenth Century* ed. J. R. L. Highfield & R. Jeffs (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1981), 88-109, at 97, 102-4; Attreed, *The King's Towns*, 159. While the loans may have contained hidden interest payments, lending on this scale was clearly not motivated by commercial considerations alone: K. B. McFarlane, "Loans to the Lancastrian Kings: The Problem of Inducement", *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 9 (1947) 51-68, rep. in his England in the Fifteenth Century, 57-78.

[802] *CPR*, *1461-67*, 193.

[803] TNA C88/155 no. 2; *CPR*, *1461-67*, 438.

[804] *CCR*, *1454-61*, 475.

[805] *CCR*, *1454-61*, 446.

[806] *CCR*, *1454-61*, 140.

[807] This discussion of the Yonge-Fortescue relationship is based on: BL Egerton Roll, 8783; TNA E328/136; Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office, Hungerford Papers, 490/1484; *Pedes Finium, Commonly Called Feet of Fines, for Somerset, Henry IV - Henry VI* ed. Emanuel Green, Somerset Record Society, 22 (1906), 113, 201; CPR, *1452-61*, 150, 199-200, 342, *CCR, 1454-61*, 192, 439, 482-3; E. W. Ives, "Fortescue, Sir John (c.1397–1479)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9944 [accessed 07/01/13]); Johnson, Duke Richard of York, 63.

casual acquaintance. Ironically perhaps, their introduction may have come through a shared connection with the Duke of York, for whom both men, together with William Canynges, acted as feoffees from 1448 to 1450. Both Yonge and Fortescue were associated with the Hungerford family of Somerset and Wiltshire.[808] Fortescue acted as counsel for Walter, Lord Hungerford (d. 1449), and was an executor of his will, while Yonge and Walter Hungerford were often associated together, for example as feoffees for the Duke of York. Yonge and Fortescue acted as feoffees for Sir Edward Hungerford and Robert, Lord Hungerford and Moleyns in 1454 and March 1460 respectively. In the latter year the two men also appeared together as feoffees for Henry, Duke of Exeter and with John, Earl of Shrewsbury (who, as we have seen, appeared with Yonge's step-brother the same year) in a quitclaim in Nottinghamshire. Fortescue's final association with Yonge came in January 1461, when Sir John employed Thomas as his agent to settle property on his wife Isabel, 'bicause of the trouble and Joperde that [he] was and stode in', before joining Queen Margaret in the North.[809] Even after the death of his younger brother fighting for the Lancastrians at St Alban's in 1455, and his own leading role in the condemnation of the Yorkist lords at the Coventry parliament of 1459, Fortescue was still able to call upon the services of a man who had been known as a committed servant of the Yorkists since at least 1451: his choice of Yonge to help him secure his property was of course very sensible given the political climate of the time; that Yonge was willing to help him suggests that theirs was something more than just a business relationship. Other Lancastrian members of Yonge's circle were Edmund, Marquess of Dorset and his wife Eleanor, who in 1448 gave him a remainder interest in one of their Dorset manors, and Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, by whom he was retained as legal counsel from 1446 to 1458.[810]

The behaviour of some of the Bristol elite, including Canynges and Yonge, in not allowing magnate patronage to interfere with their business and personal relationships, was similar to that of their metropolitan counterparts in the 1450s.[811] London was forced to decide between Yorkist and Lancastrian at the beginning of July 1460, with the Yorkists at its gates, but as far as we can tell, Bristol only had to do so in December, when it apparently resisted the Lancastrian army under the leadership of Somerset and Devon; thereafter, its support was generous and very public. This is not necessarily to say that the attitudes of the Bristol elite were merely pragmatic, that they cared little who was in power so long as whoever it was ensured a stable commercial environment. Taking this line, one could argue that after March 1461 the Bristol elite, having quickly reconciled themselves to the Yorkist victory, calculated that it was in their interests to keep them in power, and so gave their support not out of any factional or ideological commitment, but merely to safeguard an investment that would surely be lost if the Lancastrians were to regain power. However, this view would be to ignore the considerable evidence already produced for the existence of Yorkist sympathies in

---

[808] For the Hungerfords, see Charles Kightly, "Hungerford, Walter, First Baron Hungerford (1378–1449)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14181 [accessed 07/01/13]); Michael Hicks, "Hungerford, Robert, Third Baron Hungerford and Baron Moleyns (c.1423–1464)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14178 [accessed 07/01/13]); J. S. Roskell & Charles Kightly, "Hungerford, Sir Walter (1378-1449), of Farleigh Hungerford, Som. and Heytesbury, Wilts.", in *HPHC, 1386-1421* (http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/hungerford-sir-walter-1378-1449 [accessed 07/01/13]).

[809] Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. 1, 323.

[810] *CCR*, *1454-61*, 20; Pollard, "Yonge, Sir Thomas (c.1405-1477)".

[811] Barron, "London and the Crown, 1451-61", 88-109; J. L. Bolton, "The City and the Crown, 1456-61", *London Journal*, 12 (1986), 11-24.

Bristol in the 1450s. Giving open support to one side in a civil war is to risk being regarded as a traitor by the other: even allowing for the legitimacy of King Edward IV's rule, Bristol's support for him in February 1461, before his coronation, even if not the rebuff it gave to the Lancastrian force in December, looks very much like treason. There is no contradiction between Bristol's long-standing Yorkist sympathies on the one hand, and its late public declaration of support on the other; to act otherwise would have been foolish in the extreme. Of course, sympathy is very different from active support, and it may well have been the case that York's agents in Bristol in the 1450s were few; but if so, then they were still powerful. Thomas Yonge and his step-brother William Canynges are the only two Bristolians we can confidently describe as 'Yorkists' much before 1460, but they were at the very pinnacle of the civic elite. Interestingly, their full brothers, respectively John Yonge and Thomas Canynges, were close to the top of London's elite at the same time, and it is quite possible that both sets of brothers were acting behind the scenes to strengthen the Yorkist connection in their respective communities, and to ensure that when the time came, the right choice would be made.[812]

As in 1399, there are a number of explanations for Bristol's disenchantment with the old regime. The loss of Gascony in 1453, and the collapse of Bristol's wine and cloth trades that it precipitated, must have been a factor. Bristolians in the late 1450s and early 1460s were not to know that this economic depression would be temporary. Yorkist claims that France had been lost through a combination of incompetence and corruption amounting to treason may have received as warm a reception in Bristol as anywhere else in the realm.

As trade declined, so the burdens of the Lancastrian monarchy grew. Ships, money and men were being demanded in increasing numbers, with increasing urgency, but to decreasing effect, as the English position in France collapsed between 1447 and 1453. In 1458 the Crown turned its attention once again to its revenue from the Bristol customs. On 5 August the Bristol searcher, John Wyche, the same customs official who had been investigated in 1441, and who was one of the very few who seem to have been acceptable to both York and the Lancastrians, entered into a recognisance with the Crown for 1,000 marks on condition that each quarter year of his term of office he would return to the Exchequer one hundred marks (£66 13s. 4d.) over and above whatever sum had previously been raised from the Bristol customs for the same period; in exchange, he was allowed to keep half of the goods he lawfully confiscated.[813] Given that Bristol's overseas trade and customs receipts were in decline, with no sign of imminent recovery, Wyche could only have fulfilled the terms of this recognisance by more rigorous searches, thereby diminishing the profits of smuggling, or by making false claims to forfeitures: he may well have done both, but even the first risked antagonising a substantial number of Bristol merchants. While levels of smuggling were probably lower than would be found in Tudor Bristol, it may still have been the case that the Crown usually turned a blind eye to a certain amount, in tacit recognition of the town's generous provision of ships and money.[814] The renewed pressure on customs evasion came at the same time as a crackdown on illicit trade with Iceland, following the Anglo-Danish treaty of 1444.[815] In 1448 a Bristol ship and its cargo of fish and other merchandise was confiscated for unlicensed trading with Iceland, while 1450 and 1451

[812] I owe this suggestion to Dr Clive Burgess.
[813] *CCR*, *1454-61*, 302. Wyche had been appointed searcher in July 1458: *CFR*, *1452-61*, 206.
[814] For Tudor smuggling, see Evan Jones, "Illicit business: Accounting for Smuggling in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Bristol", *EcHR*, 2nd series, 54 (2001), 17-38, and idem, *Inside the Illicit Economy*, passim.
[815] *CCR*, *1441-47*, 218.

saw the appointment of commissions to investigate illegal Icelandic voyages from a number of English ports, including Bristol.[816] Another irritation originating with the Crown was the payment of Queen Margaret's annuity of £102 15s. 6d. from the fee farm, which as usual had been granted to her as part of her dower.[817] There had been disagreement over this sum since 1451, and dragged on for eight years before a deal was reached by March 1459, following an enquiry by the queen's attorney, Robert Tanfield, and the sum of £10 was raised from Bristol in payment of arrears.[818]

Meanwhile, attacks on Channel shipping increased, and Crown efforts to deal with the situation seemed ineffective. Several times in the 1450s Bristol merchants were appointed to commissions investigating accusations of piracy in the Bristol Channel, particularly off the north coast of Cornwall. Bristol ships were sometimes the alleged culprits, sometimes the victims, but foreign shipping was the usual target.[819] A particularly flagrant attack on Bristol shipping was perpetrated in February 1460 by the captain of a vessel owned by the Lancastrian loyalist Sir Hugh Courtenay of Boconnoc, Cornwall. This act of piracy would have further estranged Bristolians from the Lancastrian cause in the same month that they were being exhorted to supply money and men to Sir Baldwin Fulford's efforts against Yorkists in the West Country, and Courtenay's attack may even have aimed to disrupt communications between Bristol and the exiled Yorkist lords.[820] Yorkist claims that they would restore good governance could plausibly be interpreted by mercantile communities as extending to the keeping of the seas.[821] By contrast with the hesitant performance of the Lancastrians, in the latter half of the 1450s the Earl of Warwick, as captain of Calais was sponsoring naval exploits in the Channel that earned him plaudits among English merchants. His fleet inflicted serious damage on the French, and this is what endeared him to many English merchants, who were none too squeamish about the victims when his men failed to discriminate between French and other foreign shipping, be it neutral or even allied.[822]

Seigniorial loyalties also bound some prominent Bristolians to the Yorkist-Neville axis. The loyalties of Canynges and Yonge to the Duke of York would have extended automatically to Edward IV in 1461, but the Earl of Warwick was an even more significant presence, through his acquisition by 1450 of the Earls Court and Barton, and of the former Berkeley manors of Bedminster, Hartcliffe and Portbury, all in North Somerset, immediately adjacent to the county of Bristol. In addition, since Easton-in-Gordano was held of Portbury, its lord, first the Duke of York, and then, after March 1461, King Edward IV, was technically Warwick's tenant. Thus, Bristol was encircled by Yorkist-Neville territories.

In the absence of borough financial and legal records, it is impossible to know to what extent this Yorkist/Neville tenurial presence brought with it influence within the town, but it would be extraordinary if it had no effect on factional allegiances among the

---

816 *CPR*, *1446-52*, 175, 430, 479.

817 TNA E368/225 *recorda*, Michaelmas, mm. 20-1; *CCR*, *1447-54*, 222-3, 225.

818 TNA E401/863. For Tanfield, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 262, 368, and Myers, "Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou, 1452-3", 94.

819 *CPR*, *1452-61*, 60-1, 118, 175, 225, 438, 443, 608, 614-5. For piracy in the Bristol approaches, see *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 210-12, 218-9, 222-4.

820 *CPR*, *1452-61*, 612, 650. For Courtenay as a Lancastrian, see Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (London: Methuen, 1974), 143, and J. A. F. Thompson, "The Courtenay Family in the Yorkist period", *BIHR*, 45 (1972), 234-8. For Bristol being required to contribute to Fulford's activities, see *CPR*, 1452-61, 611; Scofield, Edward IV, vol. 1, 57-9.

821 Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 191-210; Ross, *Edward IV*, 24-5.

822 Richmond, "Earl of Warwick's domination of the Channel", 2; Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 138-48.

civic elite. Equally imponderable is the balance between commercial and dynastic considerations in the shaping of Bristol's political position in the Wars of the Roses. Even posing this question assumes that Bristol had any real choice: it might be that with such a strong Yorkist-Neville presence in the area Bristol simply followed the lead of Duke and earl; but such an assumption would probably be incorrect. At the best of times – that is, when its authority was unchallenged - even central government, with all its resources, relied on co-operation and acquiescence to implement its policies; this was still more the case with magnates, even ones as powerful as York and Warwick. That the gentry clients of magnate patrons needed to be persuaded and cajoled, rather than simply threatened, has long been accepted by students of later medieval "bastard feudalism"; there is no reason to suppose that the burgesses of an important town like Bristol would have been very different.[823]

For whatever reason, Bristol found itself on the winning side in 1461, and rewards quickly followed. Three new charters were granted between October 1461 and February 1462. The first, of 22 October, was largely a restatement of the 1446 grant of Admiralty jurisdiction.[824] The charter of 14 December 1461 is a curious document, in that its main provisions, of a new court to be held in the Guildhall, of a central place for the weighing, display and sale of wool, woollen cloth and other merchandise brought by non-burgesses, of a June fair and of a levy on goods brought by sea to finance the upkeep of the walls, quays and pavements, seem to have been redundant, possibly unwelcome and not implemented. Why this should have been draughted and granted is therefore a mystery: it is almost like an unwanted gift given by a doting but misguided parent. Perhaps its main interest to us lies in its preamble. This is unusually fulsome, declaring that the king is pleased to grant the charter to "our beloved … burgesses" for the "laudable services of the burgesses of our town of Bristol, who heretofore have shown themselves grateful and willing in all things … for late services done at their own expense, cost, labour, charges, and risk – not a little to their merit …", and hence the king desires to "exert himself" for them.[825] In going so far beyond the routine formula, this text provides further evidence of Bristol's particular contribution towards the Yorkists' victory. The most significant charter was given on 12 February. This granted to the Mayor and Commonalty the fee farm in perpetuity, for the whole town outside the castle and its ditch. An annual payment of £102 15s. 6d. was to be made to the Exchequer, as well as £14 10s. to the abbot of Tewkesbury for the town tithe, £3 to the prior of St James for the rent of the town mill, and £39 14s. 6d. to the castle constable. In return for this annual total of £160 the town could keep all the profits of justice from its courts, royal escheats of real property only excepted.[826] In addition, the charters of 1373 and that of 1396 forbidding officials of the royal household from exercising jurisdiction

[823] Michael Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London: Longman, 1995), passim.

[824] *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 132-6. Bristol's admiralty jurisdiction was specifically excluded from the confiscation of Lancastrian estates, and in June 1462 the territorial extent of the port's admiralty jurisdiction was defined at a court held at Portishead by the steward of the Earl of Warwick in his capacity as lord admiral: *Calendar of the Charters etc of the City and County of Bristol*, ed. John Latimer (Bristol Corporation, 1909), 111-12; *CPR*, *1461-67*, 85; *LRBB*, vol. 1, 246.

[825] For Latimer's translation, see Calendar of the Charters, 112-13. *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 136-42; *Calendar of Charter Rolls, 1427-1516*, 162-4.

[826] *Bristol Charters*, *1378-1499*, 143-52; *Calendar of the Charters*, ed. Latimer, 115-17; *CPR*, *1461-67*, 170; *CCR*, *1461-68*, 119-21.

within Bristol were confirmed.[827] The confirmation and amplification of civic liberties at this time was recounted in celebratory tones in The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar:

> This yere [1461-62] … Philip Mede maire, bi assent of al the Counseile of Bristowe, was sende vnto the Kynges gode grace for the confirmacioun of the fraunchises and preuilegis of the saide Towne,whiche Maire spedde ful wele with the kynges gode grace, confermyng and ratefieng al the libertees of the said Towne, with newe special addicions for thonour and comon wele of the same.[828]

Edward also gave particular rewards to Bristol's overseas traders. In the closing months of 1461 Bristol merchants received sixteen licences to trade with Iceland, in contrast to the restrictions placed by Henry VI in the late 1440s and early 1450s.[829] William Canynges was particularly well rewarded: in October 1461 he received a general licence to trade, and together with fellow Bristol merchants John Shipward (also an Iceland licensee), John Gaywode and Robert Baron went on to act as a royal agent, purchasing silks and other luxuries from a merchant of Lucca; in December 1465 this syndicate was licensed to trade free of subsidy until they had recouped the sum of £322 18s. which they had spent on luxuries for the king's wardrobe.[830] Thomas Yonge also prospered in the 1460s, becoming serjeant-at-law and king's serjeant in 1463, while continuing to be retained as legal counsel for the Duchy of Lancaster estates. At some point after Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville in May 1464 Yonge joined the Queen's council, and in 1467 he became a justice of common pleas.[831] There were also the spoils of war to be distributed: in July 1461 Bristol was among those towns assigned a share of the proceeds from the Earl of Wiltshire's forfeited estates in lieu of money owed by Genoese merchants.[832]

In September 1461 Edward IV visited Bristol during his royal progress. This is recorded in The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar with evident pride:

> This noble prince kyng Edwarde the fourthe in the furst yere ofhis reigne came furst to Bristowe, where he was ful honourably receyvid in as worshipfullwise as evir he was in eny towne or citee.[833]

Edward was received at Temple Gate and introduced to a representation of William the Conqueror; he was also entertained by a performance of St George slaying the dragon. In both cases, the depiction of a martial hero renowned for vanquishing his foe might well have seemed particularly appropriate so soon after Towton; in addition, Edward had a particular enthusiasm for St George, and so the choice of this subject for one of the welcoming tableaux, while probably reflecting an existing civic connection with the saint, might also have been a piece of well-informed royal flattery.[834] However, slaying

---

[827] *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 143; *Calendar of Charter Rolls, 1427-1516*, 142; *Calendar of the Charters*, ed. Latimer, 112.
[828] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 43.
[829] *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 125, 127-9.
[830] *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 127, 296; TNA E159/243, recorda, Hilary, m. 2; *CCR, 1461-68*, 298.
[831] Ives, *Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England*, 480; Myers, "Household of Queen Elizabeth Woodville", 461-2; R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*. Vol. I, 1265-1603 (London: , 1953), 452. After the death of the Duke of York Yonge became farmer of the manor of Easton-in-Gordano, of which he had been steward: TNA SC6/1114/3.
[832] *CPR*, *1461-67*, 54.
[833] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 43.
[834] *REED*, *Bristol*, 7-8; Jonathan Good, *The Cult of St George in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2009), 86-8.

the Lancastrian dragon was a relatively straightforward exercise compared to what Edward, and Bristol, was to face at the end of the decade.

Edward's first nine years on the throne were difficult and disappointing, and ended in disaster. From Bristol's point of view the reign began auspiciously, with French restrictions eased on English trade resulting in a partial recovery in Bristol's overseas trade and, probably, increased security in the Channel. However, this "honeymoon period", if such it was, had come to an end by 1463. In this year a tax of a fifteenth and tenth caused nationwide resentment and prompted the request from the Bristol elite to Warwick to intercede with the king on their behalf for remission in recognition of their contribution to his victory.[835] Also in this year, serious disorder broke out in Bristol and its vicinity, possibly as the result of lingering Lancastrian sentiments.[836]

Edward's grant of the fee farm in perpetuity did not resolve outstanding issues regarding old claims for payment, and friction between Bristol and the Exchequer over this issue continued until at least 1468.[837] Added to this were disagreements over the payment of an annuity to Elizabeth Woodville from the Bristol fee farm. This annuity had been allocated as part of the queen's dower and as such had been paid to Queen Margaret, but before Elizabeth's public acknowledgement as queen in 1465 it had been assigned to pay debts which Edward owed to a London jeweller. Alternative arrangements for his payment had not been made when the annuity was re-assigned to Queen Elizabeth, and Thomas Yonge became embroiled in the ensuing attempts to reach a settlement.[838]

During the course of the 1460s Warwick grew increasingly unhappy with royal policy. There has been considerable debate about the causes of the earl's growing dissatisfaction with Edward IV, but his disapproval of the king's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville and the consequences of that union in terms of the dispersal of royal patronage to her relatives – not least in the matter of marriages – doubtless played its part. To this must be added the related issue of foreign policy, with Warwick favouring a rapprochement with France while Edward secured an alliance with Burgundy.[839]

Warwick's unease at Edward's foreign policy would have been shared by many Bristol merchants. Given the southern orientation of the town's overseas' trade, good relations with the king of France would have been valued more highly than those with the Duke of Burgundy, with whose territories Bristol had little direct commerce: indeed, the imposition of a Burgundian embargo on English cloth in October 1464 actually coincided with a considerable expansion in Bristol's cloth exports.[840] Bristol's merchants would therefore have been very happy with the free fairs and reduced tolls and restrictions for English merchants offered by Louis XI to Warwick's embassy in June 1467, but it was with Burgundy that Edward signed a commercial treaty five months later, much to the earl's chagrin. This treaty, and the marriage in 1468 between Edward's sister Margaret and the Duke of Burgundy, were evidently unpopular even in London, which enjoyed a healthy trade with the Netherlands; for Bristolians they might well have caused dismay.[841] The association between the Burgundian alliance and

---

[835] M. Jurkowski, C.L. Smith & D. Crook, *Lay Taxes in England and Wales, 1188-1688* (HMSO, 1998), 109-10.
[836] TNA C81/1377/18; *CPR*, *1461-67*, 304; Ross, *Edward IV*, 113; Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. 1, 318-9.
[837] TNA E159/241, *brevia directa*, m. 14, E368/241, *preceptor*, mm. 404-6.
[838] TNA C1/43/102-3, E13/151 mm. 49d-50; *CPR, 1461-67*, 430; *CCR, 1461-68*, 277, 415; *PROME,* Edward IV, 1467, June, 625a-b.
[839] Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 255-71; Pollard, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 56-65.
[840] Ross, *Edward IV*, 105; Gray, "Tables of Enrolled Customs Accounts", 335 shows Bristol's exports (including a small number of alien exports) rising from 1,614 cloths in 1463/4 to 2,645 in 1464/5.
[841] Ross, *Edward IV*, 109-11, 124.

Elizabeth Woodville, daughter of Jacquetta, duchess of Luxembourg, may have exacerbated the existing irritation caused by the complications surrounding Bristol's payment of her annuity. In addition, Bristolians were probably less than impressed at being taxed in 1468 with another two fifteenths and tenths to finance a projected invasion of France: a heavy financial burden in support of an enterprise that, had it materialised, would have caused massive disruption to Bristol's Gascon trade.[842]

Warwick's resentment at Edward's rule was made brutally apparent in July 1469, when open warfare erupted between their forces. Warwick defeated Edward's favourite, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Devon, at Edgecote, near Banbury in Oxfordshire. Pembroke and his brother Sir Richard Herbert were executed soon after the battle, while the Earl of Devon was caught and executed the following month at Bridgwater.[843] These killings at a stroke removed the uppermost layer of royal authority in South Wales and the West Country. Meanwhile, Edward effectively became Warwick's prisoner, and the latter attempted to rule through him as a puppet king.

One more Herbert was killed within a month of the battle: this was probably another of Pembroke's brothers, Thomas Herbert, esquire of the body to Edward IV, constable of Gloucester castle and a former sheriff and MP for Gloucestershire, who was executed - or lynched - in Bristol, almost certainly on Warwick's orders, or at least with his knowledge and approval.[844] By 1469 Warwick had held his former Berkeley properties and the Earl's Court and Barton for around twenty years, giving him ample time in which to build up a network of Bristol clients.[845]

The earl's brief period of national ascendancy ushered in by Edgecote may have had further repercussions in Bristol. In August a commission was issued to Thomas Yonge, Mayor Philip Mede and the recorder, Nicholas Hervey, to investigate the felonies, riots and other offences allegedly committed by two Bristol yeomen, John Swancote and Walter Holder.[846] Swancote, also a Bristol merchant, had been a customs officer in Bristol since November 1465, but was evidently removed from office around this time, and Holder was his mainpernor when he was appointed approver of the subsidy in Wiltshire in May 1466.[847] Swancote was also a trusted and well-rewarded servant of Edward IV. Within a year of the king's accession he had received a grant for life of lands in Shropshire, and these were exempted from the Act of Resumption of 1464. In March 1465 he was one of the surveyors of the Somerset lands of the attainted Earl of Wiltshire, a portion of which, namely a moiety of the manor of Belton, he received for

---

[842] Ross, *Edward IV*, 112-3; Jurkowski, Smith and Crook, *Lay Taxes*, 110-1.

[843] Ross, *Edward IV*, 131-2.

[844] This Thomas Herbert is to be distinguished from his namesake, a Bristol customs collector between 1466 and 1468, who was probably his son or nephew; see P. Fleming, *Bristol and the Wars of the Roses*, BBHA (Bristol, 2005), 18-21, for a discussion of this episode and the two Thomas Herberts.

[845] Among these were probably Sir Richard Choke, the prominent Somerset lawyer, the Bristol burgesses William Spenser, James Touker and John Pavy, with whom the earl was associated in a gift of all goods by William Beneshen, a Wiltshire esquire, in 1464, and William Joce, a Bristol merchant, who made a gift of all his goods to Warwick, among others, in 1467: TNA C146/17; *CCR, 1461-68*, 448-9.

[846] *CPR, 1467-77*, 172. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament, Biographies*, 448, identifies the recorder with Nicholas Hervey of Surrey, whose marriage into the Scofield family of Somerset brought him into the country by 1462: *CCR*, 1468-76, 158-9, 373. For recorders generally, see James Lee, "Urban Recorders and the Crown in Late Medieval England", in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 163-77.

[847] *CFR*, *1461-71*, 163, 182; *CPR*, *1467-77*, 166; *Overseas Trade*, ed. Carus-Wilson, 133, 218. In 1462 Holder was on a piracy commission in Somerset and Gloucestershire, and in 1464 was granted custody of two manors and lands near Bristol: *CPR*, *1461-67*, 201, 382.

life by a grant made in June 1468. He was also associated with Edward's favourite Lord Hastings, who was among a group of recipients of Swancote's gift of all goods in April 1469: an act, possibly, motivated by fears of the very sort of persecution he would suffer in a few months' time.[848] That the August commission was politically motivated, part of a move to purge Bristol of potential opponents of Warwick, is suggested by the timings of Swancote's dismissals and re-appointments at the Bristol customs house. In October 1469 Edward was able to reassert control, and the following month Swancote's wife, Alice, secured a pardon for all offences allegedly committed by the couple and for all consequent forfeitures, while in the following March Swancote was reappointed to a post at the customs house, as gauger. Later that year Edward was forced to flee, thereby initiating the short period of Lancastrian-Neville rule known as the Readeption and, with Warwick once again in power, Swancote once again lost his place in the customs; once again, in February 1471, he had to secure a pardon, and in December 1472, eighteen months after Edward's final return to power, he was re-appointed as gauger, this time for life.[849]

Swancote was evidently not alone in being purged from the Bristol customs house by Warwick in 1469. Between 23 and 29 August the searcher, gauger, controller and one of the two collectors were replaced. Three of their four replacements were new to the Bristol customs service and would not be re-appointed after Edward's recovery in October, and the fourth, Nicholas Waren, would only be re-appointed during the Readeption. Their replacements in turn, appointed in November 1469, were also new to the Bristol customs house, and would not be re-appointed after Edward's second loss of power.[850] At least one of the 1469 appointments was a member of Warwick's affinity: Daniel Sheldon, appointed collector on 23 August, was at the same time an official of the Earl's Court.[851] If the Bristol customs administration had not been politicised by the time of the Yorkist challenge and triumph ten years earlier, then it certainly was now. In this, it probably reflected the general situation among the burgesses. Bristol was under Warwick's control, but as a rebel against the Yorkist king he could not command the allegiance of all Bristolians.

Warwick had also suborned Edward's own brother, George, Duke of Clarence, into an alliance, but by March 1470 the king was pursuing them and their small army of followers across the Midlands. Warwick and Clarence passed through Bristol in late March or early April 1470, with perhaps as many as five thousand men, and left their artillery there before embarking at Exeter for exile in France. Bristol was clearly regarded as a relatively safe and secure refuge, at least temporarily. After Warwick's return in September he revisited Bristol, which gave him a warm welcome. He recovered his artillery and was joined by large numbers of men, among whom may have been a group of Bristolians.[852]

---

[848] *CPR*, *1461-67*, pp. 63, 452, 1467-77, p. 83; *PROME,* Edward IV 1463, April, 542a-b; *CCR*, *1468-76*, 363.
[849] *CPR*, *1467-77*, 180, 206, 269, 363; TNA C67/44 m. 1, E159/248.
[850] *CFR*, *1461-71*, 248-51; *CPR, 1467-77*, 167, 554.
[851] Somerset Record Office DD\SPY/16/10, 15; Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 251.
[852] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 44; *Journal de Jean de Roye, connu sous le nom de chronique scandaleuse, 1460-1483*, ed. B. de Mandrot (Paris: Société de l'histoire de France, 1894), vol. 1, 245-6; J. Waurin, *Recueil des croniques et anchiennes istories de la Grand Bretaigne*, vol. 5, ed. W. Hardy and E.L.C.P. Hardy, (London: RS, 1891), 611; Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 286, 300; Hicks, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence*, 59, 72; P.W. Holland, "The Lincolnshire Rebellion of March 1470", *EHR*, 103 (1988), 854-61. On 25 April 1470 a commission was issued to seize the possessions of Clarence and Warwick in Bristol and Somerset, and these presumably included the artillery train: *CPR*, *1467-77*, 218. In July some ordnance was despatched from Bristol to the Tower (Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. 1, 534), but there were still some pieces left there the

By the autumn of 1470 Henry VI was briefly restored to the throne with the assistance of Warwick and Clarence, in association with Queen Margaret. The Readeption seems to have passed reasonably peacefully in Bristol until its very last days, but then the town found itself at the centre of events. Edward had already defeated and killed Warwick at the battle of Barnet (on 14 April), when on 1 May 1471 Margaret's army entered Bristol. Here, according to the pro-Yorkist Arrival of Edward IV,

> ...they were greatly refreshed and relevyd, by such as were the Kyngs rebells in that towne, of money, men, and artilarye; wherethrwghe they toke new corage, the Thursday aftar to take the filde, and gyve the Kynge battayll, ...'[853]

The Bristol contingent that marched with Margaret to defeat at Tewkesbury two days later was probably led by the recorder, Nicholas Hervey, who did not survive the battle.[854]

Edward's victory was made possible by Clarence's defection. The Duke's marriage to Warwick's daughter Isabel the previous year had made him heir to the earl's Bristol properties, and after his father-in-law's death at Barnet Clarence had wasted no time in asserting his rights. Courts were held and manors occupied in his name even before Tewkesbury, and with equal despatch he evidently slid into Warwick's former role as Bristol's good lord and patron.[855]

While Edward had little option but to forgive his errant brother, he was under no such compunction when it came to disloyal townsfolk. Bristol had to be made to pay for its support for Warwick and Margaret. Edward's retribution was swift but discriminating. At Coventry on 12 May, just eight days after Tewkesbury, he sent a letter under the privy seal to Bristol announcing that, 'albeit that thinhabitauntz ... haue not be of soche demeanynges in to late in thaire duetie and ligeaunce as thei aught to haue been of towardes vs', since he had been satisfied that, 'the offenses haue not be committed by the generalte of the Town, but onely by certain persones of the same', he was inclined 'to entrete suche persones as humbly wol sue vn to vs, not by waie of rigoure but with resonable moderacion, punyshing the principall sturrers of rebellion ayenst vs and not a generalte'. Edward stressed that he had been moved to show leniency through Clarence's intercession.[856] The order was given for the arrest of a small group of Bristolians, including the recorder, who was of course already dead, and four prominent common councillors, and the mayor was ordered to pass on the names of any other suspects. The mayor himself does not appear to have been under suspicion,

---

following March, when a gun was taken for Stanley's siege of Hornby Castle in Lancashire: *CPR*, *1467-77*, 241; Ross, *Edward IV*, 164. Clarence's visit to Bristol on 15 March 1471 may have been connected to this move: HMC, *12th Report, Appendix Part IV: MSS of the Duke of Rutland*, vol. 1 (London, 1888), 2.

[853] *Historie of the Arrival of Edward IV in England and the Final Recouerye of his Kingdomes from Henry VI*, ed. J. Bruce, Camden Society, 1 (1838), 25.

[854] *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles*, ed. Gairdner, 184; *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (OUP, 1913), 378.

[855] Hicks, "Career of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence", 310-15. Hervey's replacement as Bristol recorder was John Twynyho, who had assumed office by November 1472: *CCR*, *1468-76*, nos. 624, 963.

[856] *LRBB*, vol. 2, 130-2. That intercession was not given without a price. In June 1472 the Common Council recompensed William Spenser for the five tuns of wine he had supplied, at a personal cost of £30, to the then mayor, Thomas Kempson, and sheriff, John Shipward junior, for presentation to Clarence: "For his good and gracious lordschipp to be schewyd un to the Kyng ... for his goode Grace to be hadd To the seide maire Schiryff and Comynaltee of Bristowe for diverse causes uppon thayme by oure seide Soveraigne lordis highnesse and his Counsell surmyttyd": *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 95.

and neither he nor the sheriff felt the need to buy pardons within the following twelve months. The suspected councillors eventually secured pardons.[857]

Support for the Readeption had been far from total within Bristol's burgess elite, who once again were divided along factional lines. This split seems to have been more serious than that seen after the Yorkist seizure of power in 1461, when Lancastrian support seems largely to have been confined to those outside the governing elite. Edward IV's limited and discriminating punishment meted out to Bristol after his recovery of power in 1471 suggests that a significant number of his supporters among Bristol's elite clung on during his absence.

That said, one very surprising sympathiser with the Readeption regime may have been none other than William Canynges, by now Dean of Westbury-on-Trym. He took out a pardon after Tewkesbury, and Ricart's assertion that he took holy orders in response to Edward's pressure on him to marry, combined with Worcestre's comment that he paid the king a fine of £2000, *pro pace sua habenda,* may be taken to indicate a definite *froideur* between the erstwhile friends, which may have been prompted, on the king's side, by doubts about his loyalty.[858]

Further light on events in Bristol in and around the Readeption is provided by a series of allegations made in March 1479.[859] These were initiated by an accusation of treason made by Thomas Norton, a Bristol gentleman, alchemist, and customs collector, against Mayor William Spenser, one of the 'principall sturrers of rebellion' exempted from Edward's 1471 pardon.[860] Direct record of the grounds for Norton's accusation have not survived, but can be guessed at from other accusations made in the course of their investigation. In an attempt to discredit Norton the sheriff and bailiffs claimed that he had fallen out with his father-in-law, John Shipward senior (another of the "principall sturrers"), that after Tewkesbury he had been commissioned by Edward to seize into the king's hands all of the Somerset property that had been held by Warwick, and on the strength of this commission had "publisshed and noised that he had auctoritee of the kinge ... to smyte of the hedde of the saide John Shipward".[861] Furthermore, three prisoners in Newgate claimed to have heard a fellow prisoner, John Wilkins, whom they alleged to have been one of Norton's henchmen, declare:

> ... that the saide William Spencer nowe Maire was untrewe to the Kinge ... And that the saide Maire had CCCC li of the goodes of George late Duc of Clarance And CCC li of the goodes of Richard late Erle of Warwyk ...[862]

---

[857] In addition to Recorder Hervey the "principall sturrers" were the prominent common councillors William Spenser, John Shipward senior, Robert Straunge and John Cogan, and a painter, John Body. In November all but Body were bound to appear before the king, together with Philip Mede, not named in Edward's letter but presumably informed against subsequently, and within a year all had received pardons. In January 1472 a pardon was granted to the mayor, sheriff, burgesses and commonalty: *CPR*, 1467-77, 274; *CCR*, *1468-76*, n. 843; TNA C67/48, mm 18, 20, 34; C67/49, m 3.

[858] Burgess, "Canynges, William (1402–1474)"; Sherborne, *William Canynges*, 17, 19; Orme and Cannon, *Westbury-on-Trym,* 81-2; *William Worcestre, Itineraries*, ed. Harvey, 52-3; Ricart, *Kalendar,* 44.

[859] Unless otherwise stated, the following is based on *GRBB*, *Text, Part 4*, 57-93.

[860] For Norton, see *Thomas Norton's Ordinal of Alchemy*, ed. J. Reidy, Early English Text Society, original series, 272 (1975), xxxvii-lii; Jonathan Hughes, *Arthurian Myths and Alchemy: The Kingship of Edward IV* (Stroud: Sutton, 2002), 199-201; Anthony Gross, "Thomas Norton (d. 1513)", *ODNB.* He was appointed collector of the Bristol customs in 1475: *CFR*, *1471-85*, nos. 292, 299.

[861] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 4*, 70.

[862] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 4*, 82.

If there is any truth to these accusations then it looks as though Warwick had entrusted his Somerset property to Shipward, while Spenser had the keeping of some part at least of the earl's goods; the most likely time for these arrangements to have been made was the spring of 1470, as the fleeing Warwick and Clarence passed through Bristol on their way to the south coast. The accusation that Spenser was withholding some of Clarence's goods may relate to this episode, or to more recent attempts to conceal his property following the Duke's execution. In any case, if we can accept them as true, these allegations demonstrate the close relationship between two key members of the Bristol elite and the two rebel magnates. Norton's motives for confronting Spenser, and thereby putting himself in peril, may have been in part personal, if he really did have such a grudge against Shipward, but political loyalties are likely to have been more important. Norton had probably been a member of the royal household since 1466, and may have shared Edward's exile; .[863] When he accused Spenser he had been accompanied by Walter Holder, who along with John Swancote had been investigated under the terms of the1469 commission, so we may assume that both Norton and Holder were Edwardian loyalists opposed to Warwick and the Readeption. Norton's case against Spenser was heard before the king, and Spenser exonerated. That Norton escaped with only a fine is interesting: did his previous devoted service incline Edward to leniency? Did the king wish to retain his services as an alchemist? Or did he recognise that there was in fact truth to Norton's claims, but that now was not the time to pursue them?

After 1471 Bristol's elite worked hard to regain Edward's good will. The town reacted enthusiastically to the call for ships to transport the royal army to France in 1475. The king visited Bristol in October 1474 and promised to reward those who would build a substantial vessel that could be used for this purpose. The response was impressive: John Withipol and John Jay prepared five ships at a personal cost, they claimed, of £190 15s., for which they were later recompensed by the Crown; William de la Fount was allowed to trade free of customs because he had "fully made and apparelled a ship of the portage of 200 tuns or under", and similar favours were extended to ten other Bristol merchants, presumably for the same reason.[864] Ricart relates that "a grete benevolence of money" was raised and given to Edward "to the sustentacion of his werres": this amounted to £276 15s. 10d., and was the second largest urban contribution next to London.[865] While these contributions continued Bristol's tradition of generous support for royal naval and military activities, it is hard to imagine that the town was in any position to quibble over Edward's demands after its political miscalculation made during the Readeption.

Clarence's final fall from grace in 1478 had several causes, but the catalyst for the process that led to his death has a Bristol dimension. In April 1477 Ankarette Twynyho was tried, condemned and executed, all within one day, at Warwick for having poisoned her mistress, Isabel, duchess of Clarence, the previous October.[866] These irregular proceedings were engineered by the Duke, and would be connected, in ways whose precise nature is still unclear, to his arrest in June and eventual execution in February 1478.

---

[863] Hughes, *Arthurian Myths and Alchemy*, 201, 288.

[864] *CPR*, *1467-77*, 545. Bristol was included among those ports from whom shipping was to be taken for the expedition: ibid, 493-4; Lee, "Political Communication", p. 42.

[865] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 45; Lee, "Political Communication", 22, 39.

[866] Unless otherwise indicated, the following is based on Hicks, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence*, 124-6, 150-4.

Ankarette Twynyho was part of a regionally important and influential family who had made their fortune through sheep-farming. She was the widow of William, a gentleman of Keyford, Somerset, who died in 1472, and who may also have been a Clarence servant; their two sons were part of the ducal affinity, as was, probably, her son-in-law, Thomas Delalynde. However, it was her kinsman John who had strong Bristol connections. John Twynyho was a Cirencester lawyer and a member of the council of Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, and became recorder of Bristol in 1471/2, he was also one of its MPS in 1472/3 and 1484. John Twynyho had family and property connections with Bristol. In 1483 he acquired some of William Canynges' former Bristol property, and two years earlier he was licensed to found a perpetual chantry in the church of St John the Baptist in Bristol for the good estate and souls of himself, the king and queen, and the Bristol merchant Thomas Rowley and his late wife Margaret, this to be known as "Roley is chaunterie". The Rowleys' daughter Joan had married Roger Twynyho esquire of Keyford in Somerset, Ankarette and William's grandson, and through her he acquired the Rowley's Bristol properties.[867] The family's connections with Bristol went back some way: an earlier John Twynyho had been a collector of the customs and a householder in Bristol in the 1430s.[868] Despite the fact that Clarence procured the execution of Ankarette, in his will of 1485 John Twynyho still remembered the Duke with some affection, leaving a silver cup to another Twynyho relative, the abbess of Shaftesbury Abbey, which item "venerabilis dux clarencie ex sua benevolencia michi dedit".[869]

A very plausible explanation for Clarence's persecution of Ankerette Twynyho has been proposed by Professor Hicks, who sees this, and other trumped-up charges which the Duke levelled at some of his former servants, as an attempt by him to punish what he saw as their disloyalty in abandoning him for the rapidly rising stars of his rivals, the Woodville family, in particular Thomas Grey, Marquess of Dorset, son of Queen Elizabeth Woodville by her first marriage.[870] With this in mind, there is a certain irony in the fact that following Clarence's execution the wardship and marriage of his under-age son and heir, Edward, Earl of Warwick, together with the keeping of his property, including the Earl's Court and manor of Barton, was given to none other than the Marquess of Dorset; his steward in both the court and the manor was John Twynyho.[871] Despite Twynyho's continued affection for Clarence's memory, he was perfectly willing to associate himself with the Woodvilles: in addition to serving as Dorset's steward he had also become attorney-general to Queen Elizabeth's son Edward, prince of Wales by 1478.[872] Meanwhile, Thomas Norton's accusation against Mayor Spenser in 1479 may have been related to Clarence's execution in February 1478. If Clarence had been Spenser's patron, then Norton may have seen his removal and, possibly, the replacement of his network of patronage and influence by that of the Woodvilles, as finally giving him the opportunity to avenge himself on, as he saw it, an erstwhile traitor.

---

[867] Joan Twynyho's will, made in 1489 but not proved until 1493, is TNA PROB 11/10/45; her husband Roger's of 1497, is PROB 11/11/263, and mentions his Bristol property, but in it he asks to be buried in Frome, Somerset. For John's licence to found the Rowley chantry see *CPR*, 1476-85, 235. For John's acquisition of the Canynges properties, *GRBB Text, Part 3*, 150-2. He held a tenement in Marsh Street: *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 166-7; Leech, *Topography*, 90-1.

[868] TNA E 122/17/42, E 122/18/30-1, 37, 40. Leech, *Topography*, 40, 75.

[869] TNA PROB11/7/169.

[870] Hicks, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence.*

[871] *CPR*, *1476-85*, 130, 212.

[872] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 4*, 92.

Edward IV's death in April 1483 and his brother's removal of his eldest son and heir Edward V to take the throne as Richard III in July led, in October, to a massive uprising against the usurper across southern England, known as 'Buckingham's Rebellion', after Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. The rebellion was led mainly by former servants of Edward IV and Woodville clients and associates. By then, it was assumed that Edward V and his brother were dead, and so the rebel leadership had began negotiating with the exiled Lancastrian claimant to the throne, Henry Tudor.[873] One of the places where the conspiracy was hatched was Buckingham's residence at Thornbury Castle, just to the north of Bristol. In August and September meetings took place here between Buckingham, John Morton, bishop of Ely, Lionel Woodville, bishop of Salisbury and, possibly, Margaret Beaufort, Henry Tudor's mother.[874] Given Thornbury's proximity to Bristol it would be surprising if the town played no part in the conspiracy. According to later annals there were accusations that a prominent Bristolian gave support for Henry Tudor even before Richard's accession: supposedly, in 1479 Robert Straunge, one of the burgesses named eight years earlier as a supporter of the Readeption regime, was falsely accused of supplying coin to the exiled Tudor.[875] Among the Buckingham rebels was one of the Twynyhos , William, son of William senior and Ankerette, a king's esquire and a former servant of Clarence, but John seems not to have joined him.[876] There was some Bristol involvement in Buckingham's Rebellion itself, but it appears to have been limited: two of its customs officials, John Kymer and Thomas Croft, who had links, respectively, with Buckingham himself and Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, joined the rebellion. After the rebellion's collapse Croft may have fled to join Henry Tudor in exile, and he fought at Bosworth. Kymer secured a pardon from Richard III but may also have gone into exile, and was rewarded by Henry VII for his efforts.[877] Overall, Bristol's participation in the rebellion was on nothing like the scale of 1460/1 and 1470/1. The Woodville connection, while present in the town, was shallow compared to the loyalties once commanded by the Earl of Warwick.

Bristol's relations with Richard III after Buckingham's Rebellion do not suggest that the town was out of favour. In 1483/4 there occurred both a great storm which seriously damaged vessels moored at Bristol and King Road, and Breton attacks on Bristol shipping. These calamities may have prompted a successful renegotiation of the fee farm in March 1484, whereby it was reduced by £60 per annum, starting from 1485. As Dr Lee has suggested, the relative ease with which the fee farm was renegotiated in 1484 may reflect both Bristol's limited role in Buckingham's Rebellion, and Richard III's need to consolidate support in Southern England after the uprising, while in any case it is further impressive testimony to the town's importance in the eyes of the Crown.[878]

After his victory at Bosworth Henry VII had the young Edward, Earl of Warwick, son of Clarence, incarcerated in the Tower for the crime of being a Yorkist heir to the throne. Support for the Warwick line died hard in Bristol. In May 1486 Nicholas Covell, a Bristol craftsman, allegedly took part in armed demonstrations at Westminster and

---

[873] For the rebellion, see Louise Gill, *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion* (Thrupp: Sutton, 1999); for Henry Tudor before 1485, see R. A. Griffiths & Roger S. Thomas, *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty* (Alan Sutton, Stroud, 1985).

[874] Gill, *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion*, 13, 65.

[875] *Adams's Chronicle*, ed. Fox,73.

[876] Gill, *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion*, 33, 42, 80.

[877] Gill, *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion*, 85, 100, 105, 122, 138.

[878] Lee, "Political Communication", 39-40; *GRBB*, *Text, Part 4*, 96-7; C.S.L. Davies, "The Alleged 'Sack of Bristol': International Ramifications of Breton Privateering, 1484-5", *Historical Research*, 67 (1994), 230-39.

Highbury, near London. He and his accomplices were accused of plotting the destruction of Henry VII, and of carrying a standard bearing the device of the ragged staff, a sure sign that they supported the Warwick claim.[879]

May 1486 was also the month in which Henry Tudor made his first visit to Bristol as king.[880] His reception was carefully designed - quite possibly by Ricart, the town clerk, among others - to initiate a dialogue between town and crown in terms that would address Bristol's concerns and allay any doubts the king had as to its loyalty. This was a particularly sensitive time, since a month earlier Humphrey Stafford and his brothers, adherents of the Yorkist rebel Viscount Lovell, had attempted to seize the city of Worcester. While Bristol had given some limited support to Buckingham's rebellion, and possibly to the exiled Henry himself, the alleged presence of a Bristolian at a demonstration in favour of the young Earl of Warwick suggests that careful diplomacy may have been required. Seen in this light, the performances given as part of the welcoming ceremonial take on an added significance. At the High Cross Henry was addressed by Prudentia and Justicia, the cardinal virtues of medieval kingship. Prudentia began by stressing Bristol's loyalty, and then observed with approval that:

> Ye yef not credence to lightly
> Too feyned tales that make myght discencion

These lines, based on a Secreta secretorum text, urge Henry not to listen to rumours: including, perhaps, tales of Bristol's infidelity.

In addition to assuaging royal suspicions, there was also a favour to be asked. As Brennius related: "... Bristow Is fallen in to decaye" that was "Irrecuperable without that A due Remedy ... Prouede bee at your leyser conveniently/To your Navy & clothmaking ..."; in response, Henry conferred with the mayor, sheriffs and leading burgesses on the causes of this distress, and then implored them to build more ships. While not stated in Ricart's account, it seems likely that Henry's exhortation was accompanied by an explicit or implicit promise of financial help. The plea regarding the decline in shipping may refer to the losses of 1483/4. Whatever assistance Henry gave following his 1486 visit may have been set at naught by his decision to raise the annual fee farm payment to its former level of £160. Bristol had spent £85 on securing the reduction: as it turned out, this could not have been a good deal.

The choice of Brennius to address the king in 1486 may have been intended to do more than flatter Henry's sense of Welshness. If the Galfridian context of Brennius is remembered, he becomes a potent, maybe even poignant, figure at this point in England's history. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth, internecine struggle led to the brink of mortal war between the brothers Brennius and Belinus, but this was averted by their mother, who was a strong female figure but whose strength is manifested through her appeal to her traditional maternal role.[881] The peace that ensued allowed for foreign conquest and the founding of Bristol. Any Bristol burgesses inclined towards counter-factual history might have reflected on how different things might have been if the Duke of York and his cousin King Henry had been able to patch up their differences, perhaps

---

[879] TNA KB27/900, rex, m. 10; KB29/116, m. 15r.

[880] Unless otherwise indicated, this and the following paragraph are based on Fleming, "Processing Power", 155-9.

[881] By not being presaged by fratricide the foundation of Bristol was more auspicious than that of Rome, for Romulus had the blood of his brother Remus on his hands: the tale of this pair of brothers was surely the ur-text for Geoffrey's account.

with Queen Margaret as mediator, if that did not stretch the bounds of credibility too far, and thereby had given themselves, and the realm, the opportunity to foster domestic harmony and to reconquer the lost territories in France. The Brennius story might have appeared as an almost mirror image of recent history: a mirror image that re-ran the course of actual events - a foreign war followed by a civil war - backwards, and gave it a happy ending. Even if no such comparisons with recent history were made, the themes of forgiveness and reconciliation embodied in the Brennius story are unlikely to have been missed after Bristol's potentially calamitous mistake in the Readeption, when forgiveness and reconciliation were precisely what the Bristol elite must have hoped for from the newly-restored Edward IV, and would also have been greatly desired after Bosworth. When the victorious Edward had visited the town in 1461 the figure of the Conqueror would have seemed a fitting symbolic patron, but not so after 1471. In 1486 the Brennius story might also have been seen as presaging a future in which a realm united under a 'British' king reclaims its lost lands in France. Only with hindsight do we hold that the Hundred Years' War had definitively ended in 1453.[882]

Rather than glorious continental exploits in the spirit of Edward III or Henry V, or indeed Brennius and Belinus, much of Henry Tudor's reign was spent dealing with conspiracies and rebellion, and here Bristol's aid was once again of considerable value. A Bristol contingent was raised in 1489 and marched under the customer, John Walsh, to join Henry's forces in the suppression of the Yorkshire rebellion.[883] Two years later Henry VII visited again, and received a massive benevolence of £1,800.[884] Bristol's shipping was crucial in countering Perkin Warbeck's manoeuvrings in the Irish Sea in the 1490s, and also assisted in efforts against the Scots.[885] The most dramatic opportunity for Bristol to demonstrate its loyalty to Henry VII came in 1497.[886] In May of that year Cornwall erupted in rebellion, led by a blacksmith, Michael Joseph, and prompted by the heavy taxation being levied to pay for the defence of northern England against a threatened Scottish invasion. The rebel leaders apparently began conspiring with Warbeck, so that what began as a rebellion against tax acquired a distinctly political dimension. By the end of May the rebel army was at the gates of Exeter, which eventually allowed its leaders to enter. In June the rebellion acquired a nobleman as leader, in the person of John, Lord Audley, and spread throughout Somerset and into Wiltshire, Dorset and Hampshire. Taunton capitulated, as did Wells, where the inmates of the town gaol were liberated and encouraged to join the host for the march on Bristol.[887] Once again, as in 1399, 1461 and 1471, the town's strategic position made its acquisition crucial. Had the rebels been able to capture it, then the town could have

[882] Foundation myths as a means both of creating shared identity, and of providing a focus for reconciliation, are discussed by Richard Kearney: "The original purpose of mythologies, for Rome as for all major empires and nations, was to provide its people with a sense of 'original identity'. Ritualistic recounting of myths of origin were thought to repair the fractures of the present by invoking some primordial event which occurred at the birth of time – in illo tempore – and so revive a feeling of primordial oneness and belonging", *On Stories* (Routledge, London and New York, 2002), 87.

[883] James Lee, "Urban Policy and Urban Political Culture: Henry VII and his Towns", *Historical Research*, 82 (2009), 493-510, at 501-2; Michael J. Bennett, "Henry VII and the Northern Rising of 1489", *EHR*, 105 (1990), 34-59, at 44-5.

[884] Lee, "Urban Policy", 502. In advance of the visit many of Bristol's streets were paved and the High Cross gilded: Ricart, *Kalendar*, 47-8.

[885] Lee, "Political Communication", 42-3; Lee, "Urban Policy", 502.

[886] Unless otherwise indicated, the rest of this paragraph is based on Ian Arthurson, *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy, 1491-1499* (1997 edn., Thrupp: Sutton,), 162-8.

[887] TNA C1/217/20.

provided a bridgehead for Warbeck's entry into England from Ireland, as well as a stronghold from which London could be threatened. This was not to be. The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar eschews its normally terse chronicle entries for an extended and colourful account of Bristol's reaction to the rebels:

> This yere the Cornyshmen rebelled ageynst the King, and the lord Awdley rose with them ... The same lord when he was at Wells withthe blak smyth callid Mighell Josef, Capteyn of the Cornysh men,hauyng with them xl M[l] men, sent to the Maire of Bristowe to ordeign loddgyng and vitaill for xx M[l]. But the Maire sent them worde þat they shuld come no nere, and if they wold come ner, at their oune adventur. And then the Maire mustred and made redyto withstond the said rebelles, and garnished the town walles withen harnessid and with gonnes, and brought shippes and botes aboute the mersshe, garnisshed with men, artillery, and gonnes. And the said rebelles hereng of this chaunged theire purpose, and toke anoþer wey.[888]

Denied Bristol, the rebels turned east, and were comprehensively defeated at Blackheath, a few miles south of London. As with the situation after the second battle of St Albans in February 1461, Bristol's resistance was decisive: had it become a rebel stronghold and bridgehead, Henry may have been the first and last of England's Tudor kings.

What may have been Bristol's reward for its stand against the Cornish rebels came two years later, in the shape of another charter.[889] In contrast to the well-documented processes by which Bristol secured its charter in 1373, the background to the granting of the charter of 1499 is obscure: we do not know precisely why it was given, on whose behalf, or how much effort and negotiation went into its drafting. The charter's ramifications for internal civic government are considered in Chapter Nine but in terms of Crown-town relations its provision to replace a sheriff and two bailiffs by two sheriffs represented a considerable loosening of the reins of control, since these sheriffs were no longer to be selected by the Crown from a short list, but were to be appointed, like the mayor, from within the civic elite. A similar, if less significant, surrender of power was embodied in the provision to relinquish the appointment of the water bailiff to the mayor and common council. In return, the Crown got a more cohesive civic governing body consisting of the mayor, aldermen and sheriffs, whose control over their own community was significantly enhanced, with whom it was probably easier to do business and who could more easily be held to account for their actions. As such, it placed Bristol in the forefront of the trend towards the creation of oligarchic corporations, a form of municipal government that would become the norm for English cities from the sixteenth century until the 1830s. The charter also signalled the Crown's trust in the loyalty and competence of Bristol's governers. As occurred in 1373, in 1499 the transfer of powers from central to local government was predicated on the expectation that they would be wielded not only more effectively at that level, but also as an expression of a set of assumptions about what constituted good governance shared by the governing elites of both the town and the wider realm. Put perhaps a little crudely, if not cynically, it could be said that Bristol's dominant governing factions, having been clever or lucky in backing the winning side in 1399 and 1461, miscalculated in 1470/1, and from that point they had to recover royal confidence

[888] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 48-9.

[889] This paragraph largely follows Lee, "Political Communication", 33-6, but also draws on Lee, "Urban Policy", 501-4; Bristol Charters, 1378-1499, 177-9, and Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, 46-9.

through a long process of making their town once again trustworthy and invaluable. The summation of this process was the 1499 charter.

Chapter Eight: Bristol and the Berkeleys

While Bristolians had dealings with numerous families, organisations and authorities located in the wider region beyond the county boundary, and several aristocratic families and religious houses held property in the town, their influence on fifteenth-century Bristol's political history was minimal, certainly compared to that of the dominant local magnate family, the Berkeleys. Hence, this chapter continues the discussion of relations between Bristol and external powers by concentrating on this dynasty, and in particular the consequences for Bristol of the series of crises to which it was subjected after 1417.

The Berkeleys

The later-medieval Lordship of Berkeley originated with Robert fitz Harding, a prominent twelfth-century Bristolian who held numerous Bristol properties as a mesne tenant of Robert, earl of Gloucester. In addition, he purchased from the earl the manors of Bilswick in Gloucestershire, adjoining Bristol to the north, and Bedminster in Somerset, on the south bank of the Avon, encompassing the area of Redcliffe, as well as the nearby Somerset hundreds of Portbury, Bedminster and Hartcliff. Among the properties he acquired from other lords were the manors of Portbury and of Leigh, a member of Bedminster. All of these properties in and around Bristol remained in the family into the fifteenth century. The castle and lordship of Berkeley had come to Robert by 1166 as a grant from Henry II, thereby establishing the Fitzharding lords of Berkeley.[890] For generations the Berkeleys had been blessed with an unbroken succession of sons and heirs, so that the dynasty was untroubled by inheritance disputes. At the opening of the fifteenth century Lord Thomas presided over an agglomeration of estates that brought the lordship to its greatest extent. This was largely the result of his marriage to Margaret, daughter and sole heiress of Warin, Lord Lisle, who brought with her an estate worth around £600 per annum. The marriage extended the Berkeley holdings beyond a fairly tight grouping concentrated in Gloucestershire and North Somerset into Wiltshire, the Midlands and the South West, and increased the value of the family holdings by half.[891] At the death of Lord Thomas in 1417 the value of his estates amounted to over £1,600 per annum.[892] Thus, in the first seventeen years of the fifteenth century Bristol had to accommodate itself to a very powerful and wealthy neighbour, whose family had Bristol roots and who continued to hold extensive property both within and immediately outside its county boundary, to the south and north of the Avon and Frome.

The apogee of Berkeley wealth and power passed with Thomas's death in 1417, after which the family, and their estates, were torn asunder by an inheritance dispute. Unlike his predecessors, Lord Thomas had produced no surviving sons, only a daughter, Elizabeth (d. 1422), first wife of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. Lord Berkeley's

---

[890] Robert B. Patterson, "Robert Fitz Harding of Bristol: Profile of an Early Angevin Burgess-Baron Patrician and his Family's Urban Involvement", *Haskins Society Journal*, 1 (1989), 109-22; *CMMBC*, vol 1, xxi-xxiv; Nigel Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 62-3.

[891] Wells-Furby, *Berkeley Estate*, 13, 17-18, 24, 29.

[892] *CMMBC*, I, xl-xliii; Bridget Harvey, "The Berkeleys of Berkeley, 1281-1417: A Study in the Lesser Peerage of Late Medieval England" (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrew's, 1990), passim; Wells-Furby, *Berkeley Estate* 13-14.

nearest male heir was James, his nephew. By the terms of an entail of 1349 James was the rightful heir, but the earl of Warwick was not prepared to let legal niceties get in the way of a rich inheritance, and among much else he and his countess seized the manor and hundred of Bedminster and the hundreds of Hartcliff and Portbury.[893] These properties eventually passed to Richard Neville, earl of Warwick through the daughter of Warwick's second marriage. Elizabeth died in 1422, and Richard Beauchamp married as his second wife Isabel, the daughter of Thomas Despenser, earl of Gloucester. Their daughter Anne's marriage to Richard Neville, son of the earl of Salisbury, allowed him, by 1450, to overcome other claimants and acquire the hundreds of Bedminster, Hartcliffe and Portbury together with the rest of the Beauchamp inheritance and the title of earl of Warwick.[894]

Meanwhile, Elizabeth Berkeley and Richard Beauchamp produced three daughters and co-heiresses: Eleanor, married to Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset; Elizabeth, wife of George Neville, Lord Latimer; and Margaret, who married John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury. The first two couples did not press the claim to their part of the Berkeley inheritance, but the earl and countess of Shrewsbury were relentless in its pursuit. Shrewsbury, as well as being a powerful magnate in his own right, was a retainer of Richard, duke of York, whereas Lord Berkeley's patron Humphrey, duke of Gloucester's influence at court was fast dissipating leading up to his death in 1447. By contrast, the Talbot-York connection would persist into the later fifteenth century, and it would be a significant factor in Bristol's relations with the Talbots and the Berkeleys. In addition to being Talbot's lord, the duke of York held Easton-in-Gordano, just outside Bristol, of the former Berkeley manor of Portbury, which made him one of the tenants of Richard Neville, earl of Warwick. As a fraction of his vast estates York held other Somerset property (including a share of Bridgwater) as well as manors in Wiltshire.[895] Thus, York was doubly part of the tenurial mesh within which fifteenth-century Bristol was set.

The Berkeleys and Bristol Politics, 1399-1471

In the 1390s Thomas, Lord Berkeley could reasonably expect to have been recognised as the natural leader of Gloucestershire political society, but Richard II's personal intervention upset the local balance of power. In 1397 he created as earl of Gloucester his favorite, Thomas Dispenser, father of Isabel, future wife of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. Richard's promotion of the new earl within Gloucestershire undermined Berkeley's position and set him at loggerheads with the king. This was undoubtedly a major factor in Berkeley's declaration for Bolingbroke in 1399, and for his continuing

[893] *CMMBC*, vol. 1, xliii-xlvi, 516, 520-1; Peter Fleming and Michael Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle: Nibley Green, 1470* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), ch. 1. For Warwick holding Bedminster in 1426 see BRO AC/M/4/6.

[894] Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, 48-9.

[895] Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, 14-5; Hicks, "Career of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence", 308, tables XVI & n. For Bridgwater, see Bridgwater Borough Archives, Volume V: 1468-1485, ed. Robert W. Dunning, T.D. Tremlett and T.B. Dilks, *Somerset Record Society*, 70 (1971), xii-xiii. For Easton-in-Gordano as a manor held of Portbury, see *CIPM*, 1422-27, no. 487. Evidence for the relationship between York and Shrewsbury is provided by the annuities paid by the former to the latter in the 1440s: Johnson, Duke Richard of York, 238.

support for Henry IV until at least 1406.[896] Bolingbroke had his own reasons for executing Wiltshire, Bussy and Green after the fall of Bristol Castle, but Berkeley is unlikely to have pleaded on their behalf. When it comes to the lynching of Thomas Despenser, earl of Gloucester, in January 1400, we can surely suspect his agents of orchestrating the mob. While the financial and constitutional frictions that arose between Bristolians and Richard II doubtless played their part in swinging the town behind Henry Bolingbroke in 1399/1400, on their own they are unlikely to have provided sufficient motivation for the townspeople's violent and potentially treasonous reactions to the Ricardian regime and its representatives; this leaves Berkeley influence as the most likely causal factor.

While relations between Bristol - or, at least, "Bristol proper" north of the Avon - and the Berkeleys had been violently antagonistic in the first third of the fourteenth century, the principal casus belli being disputed claims to jurisdiction in Redcliffe, by the end of the century relations appear to have been much better.[897] Thomas, Lord Berkeley's interest in Bristol is shown by his position as the queen's farmer of the town under Henry IV, which allowed him, among other things, to appoint his steward, John Sutton, to preside over the Tolzey Court.[898] On the other hand, while it is possible that such was the power and influence of Thomas, Lord Berkeley that Bristol's independence from him and ability to resist was severely curtailed, the armed and potentially murderous protest against the aulnager in 1401 demonstrates that sections of the town's populace were still able to act without his prompting and against both his wishes and those of the governing civic elite.

After 1417 Lord Thomas's male heir, James, Lord Berkeley, was in no position to intervene in Bristol's politics in such a manner. Until his death in 1463 his energies were monopolised by the bitter conflict with his Beauchamp, Talbot and Neville rivals for the family estates. Nonetheless, Bristol would still figure in these struggles.

In 1451 the Talbot earl and countess of Shrewsbury pulled off a devastating coup against Lord Berkeley.[899] In September their men gained access to Berkeley Caste and captured Lord James; he and his four sons were then held prisoner for eleven weeks. From Berkeley they were taken to Chipping Camden in Gloucestershire where, before a commission of oyer et terminer, they were condemned for an attack on the manor of Wotton-under-Edge they had carried out the previous year. Their punishment was financially crippling: in addition to compensation for the damage done, they also had to pay the Talbots £1,000 in cash; Berkeley Castle was to be held by the Talbots as surety for payment, along with other pledges made for the sum's payment.

In November the Berkeleys were taken to Bristol. Here they appeared before a highly irregular session of the mayor's court held in the Franciscan friary, rather than the Guildhall, and were pledged both to keep the peace and to find a further £12,204 in compensation and surety. The aim was to neutralise the Berkeleys so that they were powerless to resist their Talbot enemies. The action against the Berkeleys in Bristol was made legally possible by their continued tenure of Bristol property, which brought them under the court's jurisdiction, while the unusual location of the proceedings strongly

[896] Saul, Richard II, 384; *CMMBC*, vol. 1, xl-xliii; the promotion of Despenser as earl of Gloucester might also have prompted unwelcome recollections of his ancestors, Hugh Despenser the elder and younger, and their association with Bristol in the 1320s: Liddy, "Bristol and the Crown", 48-56.

[897] The antagonism summarised in Cohn, *Popular Protest in Late Medieval English Towns*, 135-40, and Liddy, "Bristol and the Crown", 51-4.

[898] *GRBB*, Text, Part Three, 11. For the Tolzey Court, see below..

[899] For this paragraph see Fleming and Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle*, 42, 45-6.

suggests that it was assumed that there would have been resistance if they had been held in the Guildhall. The mayor himself, John Stanley, and probably the sheriff, Richard Hatter, would have presided over the court; while it is possible that they were intimidated into participation, it is more likely that they were willfully complicit. Certainly the preceding mayor, John Burton, was a member of the Talbot circle, at least insofar as he was a feoffee of the duke of York, along with his sons-in-law, the Yorkist half-brothers William Canynges and Thomas Yonge: it was during Burton's mayoralty that Yonge made his call in parliament for York to be recognized as heir to the throne.[900] Mayor Stanley's connection with the York-Talbot affinity is therefore quite possible. The decision to hold the mayor's court proceedings in the friary does suggest that support for the Talbots' action was not universal among Bristol's governing elite. Those unhappy with it may have had a Berkeley connection, or may simply have seen it as unjust. If the former, then the battle lines between Talbot-York and Berkeley would seem to have been drawn in Bristol by the opening of the 1450s.

Another possible indication of Bristol's entanglement in the conflict between Talbot and Berkeley takes us back to the customs house. In the 1450s John Wyche, the controversial Bristol customs official, was on bad terms with his fellow searcher, Thomas Talbot esquire. In July 1458 Talbot obtained a Chancery writ directing the sheriff to order Wyche and two of his associates, Raymond Walsh and William Cornwall, to find sureties for their good behaviour towards him. Wyche refused, and so the following month he was imprisoned in Newgate for thirty days. Next, during his mayoralty, which began in September 1458, Philip Mede, the future father-in-law of Maurice, brother of Lord Berkeley, attempted to apprehend Talbot, "for beating of John Wyche, Sercher, but he withstode the Maior, and exeschaped out of Temple gate".[901] If John Wyche the Bristol customs official is to be identified with the man of the same name rewarded 'for his good and laudable service' by James, Lord Berkeley in 1442, then, like Mayor Mede, he was part of the Berkeley affinity. If such were the case, then Berkeley patronage might explain not only his longevity in office, but also provide some context for the investigation into his activities ordered in 1441 and his appointment as searcher and the grant of his recognisance with the Crown in 1458, since in the former year the Talbots had the whip hand over James, Lord Berkeley, while the latter came within a period of Berkeley ascendancy following James's marriage to Joan, the sister of John, second earl of Shrewsbury, son of the earl killed at Castillon.[902] Wyche's experiences could thus be seen as an example of a client feeling the consequences of his patron's varying fortunes. The identity of the Bristol searcher Thomas Talbot esquire also prompts speculation. While no actual connection has been found, it is surely likely that he was one of the Talbots, earls of Shrewsbury and Viscounts Lisle, possibly a younger son of a cadet branch: his rank as esquire and the fact that a Bristol chronicler thought his escape worth noting support such an assumption.[903] If we are indeed

[900] Woodger and Roskell, "Burton, John II (d. 1455), of Redcliffe Street, Bristol". Shrewsbury probably only had to make a choice between continued loyalty to York and allegiance to the Lancastrian court party in 1452; he chose the latter, but in 1451 there is no reason to suspect any estrangement between them.

[901] TNA E159/235 communia, recorda, mm. 49-49d. Talbot was appointed searcher in October 1456, after the end of York's second protectorate, and pardoned in February 1458 as esquire, alias searcher in the port of Bristol: *CFR*, 1452-61, 173; TNA C67/42, m. 29. The account of his escape from Mayor Mede comes from a later annal: Hudd, "Two Bristol Calendars", 124. For the Mede marriage, see below, 00-00.

[902] Fleming and Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle*, 40-1, 47.

[903] He may also have been related to John Talbot, bailiff in 1429 (*LRBB*, vol. 2, 148), and William Talbot, burgess, mercer and bailiff, in the 1440s: *CCR, 1441-47*, 440, 473; *LRBB*, vol. 1, 186, vol. 2, 49. If these were members of the earl of Shrewsbury's family, then the Bristol connection predated the Cheddar marriage

correct in assuming Wyche to have been a Berkeley client, along with Mede, with Talbot as a kinsman of Berkeley's great rivals, then what would otherwise be an obscure series of events can be seen as another indication of how the effects of factional magnate politics were being felt in mid-century Bristol.

In attempting to make sense of the events of the 1450s we may have strayed too far into the realms of speculation. We are on firmer ground nineteen years later, when it comes to another Bristol-Berkeley link.[904] By 1470 the Berkeley inheritance dispute had passed down to a new generation. Lord James had died in 1463 leaving William as his eldest son and heir. Margaret and John, the countess and earl of Shrewsbury, were also dead, as was their son, John Talbot, Viscount Lisle, killed at the battle of Castillon in 1453, cut down alongside his father and James, another son of Lord Berkeley. Members of the next generation of both the Talbots and the Berkeleys married into Bristol's merchant aristocracy.

John, Viscount Lisle married Joan, the daughter of Thomas Cheddar. The latter's father, Robert Cheddar, had been an extremely wealthy Bristol cloth merchant who, while he invested in extensive properties in the surrounding counties, still left Bristol property worth £120 at his death in 1384. Thomas had three brothers, two of whom predeceased their father, and on the death of the third in 1437 he acquired much of the extensive family estates. While at Thomas's death in 1443 he left substantial property to an illegitimate nephew and a distant kinsman, he had also been able to make generous provision for his daughter Joan, born in 1425. John Talbot was her second husband, her first, Richard Stafford, having died by 1443.[905] As the result of this marriage the Talbots acquired a number of Bristol properties. This estate descended with the Lisle title, and in 1544 was valued at over £57 per annum when it was purchased by Bristol Corporation from Henry VIII, who had acquired it from John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, two years earlier.[906] These former Cheddar properties gave the Talbots a number of Bristol tenants; whether they also brought influence and allegiance is difficult to ascertain, although the existence of Bristol Talbots from the 1420s may suggest that a branch of the same family may have been established there before the Cheddar marriage. In the later fourteenth century Robert Cheddar and his father William were clients of Thomas, Lord Berkeley; Joan's marriage into the family of the Berkeleys' great enemy may perhaps be seen as indicating how far their influence had declined by the 1440s.

In the case of the Berkeley marriage, on the other hand, influence and allegiance are readily demonstrable. In 1465 Maurice, younger brother of William, Lord Berkeley, married Isabel, daughter of the substantial Bristol merchant and three-times mayor Philip Mede.[907] That members of these two contending noble families should have

---

in the 1440s (see below). The searcher may have been identical with the Thomas Talbot, Bristol merchant, who contracted debts with London merchants in 1469/70: TNA C131/242/14, C241/254/20, 258/37.

[904] This paragraph is based on Fleming and Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle*, 47, 50.

[905] *CMMBC*, vol. 1, 443, 482, 516-7, 519, vol. 2, 862, 959; "Cheddar, Richard (1379-1437), of Thorn Falcon, Som.", *HPHC, 1386-1421* (www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/cheddar-richard-1379-1437 [accessed 14/01/13]).

[906] BRO AC/M/21/7 (rent roll of Lisle properties, 1544); John Latimer, *Sixteenth-Century Bristol* (Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1908), 17-18. For Lisle properties in central Bristol, see Leech, *Topographies*, passim. Most of the Lisle properties noted by Leech are only identified as such in the 1544 grant, and so it is impossible to know if they were part of the Cheddar inheritance, as opposed to being acquired subsequently, but four properties, in Broad St, St Nicholas St and Wine St, had definitely been held by the Cheddars: ibid., 42, 47, 151, 178-9. In addition, the lords Lisle held property on St Michael's Hill, Baldwin St, St Thomas Lane and Redcliffe: BRO 8016/1-2, 40365/D/2/50, P.St T/D/3, 26166/144-6.

[907] *CMMBC*, vol. 1, xlvi.

married Bristol women is probably coincidental, but nonetheless it does reveal how socially significant the Bristol elite had become, in that the wealthiest among them were on occasion deemed to produce suitable matches for the local magnates. Whatever other attractions Joan Cheddar and Isabel Mede may have possessed, their fathers' liquid wealth must have been among them.

John and Joan produced a son and heir, Thomas Talbot, Viscount Lisle. After his father's death in 1453 the boy's wardship was granted to William Herbert, the future earl of Pembroke, who then married Lisle to his own daughter, Margaret. After 1465 Pembroke's son and heir was married to a sister of Queen Elizabeth Woodville. The Herbert connection thus brought Lisle into the extended Yorkist royal family. Lisle's minority ended in July 1469, when Warwick had his guardian and father-in-law executed after Edgecote. Along with his parent's estates, Lisle inherited the family feud with the Berkeleys, now presumably made more poisonous by his hatred of Warwick.

Thomas, Viscount Lisle was killed on 20 March 1470 at Nibley Green, between Wotton-under-Edge and Berkeley. His assailants were part of William, Lord Berkeley's affinity. That much is clear from contemporary evidence. Traditionally, Lisle's death is held to have occurred during the course of a battle between his forces and those of Lord Berkeley, provoked by a challenge he had issued the previous day. While the Battle of Nibley Green did happen, it probably did not happen as Berkeley portrayed it soon after the event, and it might more properly be described as a skirmish, or even an ambush. That there was an armed confrontation in which Lisle and at least one other person were killed are among the very few facts we know for sure about the incident.[908] There is reasonable certainty, however, that among those summoned to Berkeley's side on that day was a Bristol contingent led by two prominent burgesses, John Shipward junior, whose father and namesake was mayor for that year, and Philip Mede, father-in-law of Lord Berkeley's brother Maurice, who was also present. One of the Bristol contingent was a painter, John Body. In a case before King's Bench brought in 1471, Margaret, Viscount Lisle's widow, identified Body as one of the two archers whose arrows had pierced her husband's face, bringing him down before he was finished off with a sword to the heart. As we have seen, Body joined Mede, as well as John Shipward junior's father, in being exempted from the pardon Edward IV granted Bristol after Tewkesbury: Body's alleged actions at Nibley Green explain why he should have been so targeted. He is probably the same man as the John Body whose arrest by the sheriff of Devon had been ordered for plotting with the notorious Lancastrian die-hard Thomas Fulford.

While the battle of Nibley Green was the product of a private feud, its leading participants were also firmly held in the factional coils of the Wars of the Roses.[909] Lisle's Yorkist connections were balanced by those of Lord Berkeley's with the opposition. To judge by some of his associates, William, Lord Berkeley was at least on the outer fringes of Clarence's circle in 1470, and a supporter of the Readeption. In May 1471 he would play host, willingly or not, to Queen Margaret and her army en route for Tewkesbury. The presence of Bristol men at Nibley Green including, allegedly, one of Viscount Lisle's assassins, is further testimony to the strength of the town's ties not only with Lord Berkeley, but also with Warwick and Clarence. Indeed, it may suggest that Clarence's influence in Bristol pre-dated Warwick's death.

---

[908] This is discussed at greater length in Fleming and Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle*, 51-94, on which this paragraph is based.

[909] This paragraph is based on Fleming and Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle*, 86-92.

The victor of Nibley Green, lost royal favour and local position after Edward IV's return, but slowly worked himself back into both. Lord Berkeley spent much of the rest of his life in the search for higher honours, and seems to have avoided involvement in conspiracies against Yorkist or Tudor monarchs, unlike some members of cadet branches of the family, who were implicated in Buckingham's Rebellion.[910] His single-minded pursuit of titles meant that after the Readeption he was not to be the cause of further entanglements for Bristol in factional politics.

Bristol, the Crown, and the Berkeleys

By 1399 members of Bristol's prosperous civic elite were used to a high degree of autonomy from royal control, provided in return for major contributions to the royal finances and to naval and military expeditions, and were ready and able to give their counsel in matters of national commercial policy. At the same time, however, they had to acknowledge that they were within the sphere of influence of the most powerful magnate in the region, Thomas, Lord Berkeley. His presence may have had a decisive effect on Bristol's political stance at the beginning of the fifteenth century, perhaps ensuring its support for Bolingbroke in the crucial six months from July 1399 to January 1400.

Lord Thomas's death in 1417, while having obvious and calamitous consequences for the Berkeleys, would also prove to have a crucial impact upon Bristol's political history. Through Elizabeth, his daughter and heir by common law, two earls of Warwick, Richard Beauchamp, her husband, and Richard Neville, Beauchamp's grandson, acquired property and influence in the town. Through Lord Thomas's granddaughter Margaret, daughter of Elizabeth and Richard Beauchamp, the Talbots acquired both an interest in the Berkeley estates and, by her son John Talbot's marriage to Joan Cheddar, a substantial group of Bristol properties. The Neville link, together with the duke of York's tenurial connection through Easton-in-Gordano, itself held of a former Berkeley property acquired by Warwick, and from 1461 subsumed into the royal estates, brought Bristol within the Yorkist political network. Until that network was split apart by Warwick's rebellion in 1469 Bristolians did not need to choose between its two Yorkist and Neville components, but when the choice had to be made the dominant faction opted for the latter. While this could be explained purely as Bristol following the lead of its powerful patron, such a one-dimensional interpretation is simplistic. As in 1399/1400 and 1460/1461, there were sound commercial, economic and constitutional reasons for Bristol's choice of allegiance. However, in each of these three cases the town's political commitment was probably strengthened by its affiliations with magnate patrons. In 1471 Bristol was seriously wrong-footed, and was perhaps lucky to escape more serious punishment for its mistake. Thereafter, and with magnate influence somewhat diluted, the town's governors were inclined, and were able, to be more cautious, so that Bristol's involvement in Buckingham's Rebellion and in the opposition movements to Henry Tudor was limited. Indeed, with few exceptions the townspeople seem to have been loyal to Richard III and Henry VII. In the latter case that loyalty was perhaps encouraged, in the early days at least, by Henry's much-vaunted Welsh heritage. In 1499, as in 1373, loyal support was recognised with the granting of a charter, amplifying and reinforcing civic liberties and privileges. In many ways this was the fulfillment of the ambitions of the civic elite: they wanted more

[910] Gill, *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion*, passim.

control over the internal affairs of their town, allowing them to govern untrammeled by external constraints, but always in the king's name and in a way that conformed with royal strategic and political aims.

Chapter Nine: The Mayor's Realm

This discussion of the exercise of political power within Bristol begins with the relationship between the mayor and the rest of the governing elite, then considers the relationship between this elite and, on the one hand the craft guilds, and on the other the generality of Bristol's population. The interpretation of these relationships is closely related to the historiographical debate on the extent and nature of oligarchic power in later medieval urban polities. Taken in its literal sense, 'oligarchy' simply means government by the few (olígos + archo), and as such judgement of the appropriateness of its application to fifteenth-century Bristol could be settled simply by assessing the socio-economic backgrounds of the personnel of civic government and the degree of popular involvement in decision-making within the governing body. However, 'oligarchy' has acquired a pejorative connotation, that of government by the few that is self-serving and unresponsive to the needs and desires of the wider body of the governed, or in other ways unacceptable, and it is in this sense that it tends to be used today. Of course, what constitutes unacceptable behaviour is in large measure culturally-constructed and hence historically specific, so that we should not simply apply our measures of public probity to any period before our own. However, determining what was acceptable behaviour in office in this period is itself not straightforward. That there were protests against the actions of particular groups or individuals in positions of power and challenges to the right of particular individuals to hold public office is undeniable; what is less apparent is the extent to which these constituted not just attacks on abuses of an accepted system, but critique of the system itself. This system was the product of the steep gradations of political and economic power that characterised pre-modern societies, and the debate over the nature of urban oligarchies in later medieval England has been influenced by the extent to which its participants have been comfortable with the notion of 'class conflict' as an appropriate model for understanding society.[911]

Structures of Civic Power

The mayor stood at the pinnacle of Bristol's civic government.[912] The central event in Bristol's civic calendar was the mayor-making ceremony at Michaelmas, 29 September, when the new mayor was sworn in before the old mayor and the civic officials and common councillors. As befits its importance, the ceremony itself and the events either side of it are described in some detail in The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, and this

[911] For example, Susan Reynolds tends to see urban relations as essentially harmonious, with a largely shared consensus on what constituted proper behaviour and broad acceptance of the dominant political, economic and social power structures: *Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns* (OUP, 1977), 171-7, eadem, "Medieval Urban History and the History of Political Thought", *Urban History Yearbook* (1982), 14-23, at 20-2, a view broadly shared by Gervase Rosser: *Medieval Westminster, 1200-1540* (OUP, 1989), 247-8. On the other hand, models of urban society characterised by more antagonistic relationships infused with elements of class conflict have been favoured by, among others, Rodney Hilton (in, e.g. *English and French Towns in Feudal Society: A Comparative Study* (CUP, 1992), 134-51), and Stephen Rigby: "Urban 'Oligarchy' in Late Medieval England", in *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Thomson, 62-86, and *English Society in the Later Middle Ages: Class, Status and Gender* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), 165-76.

[912] Norwich provides a useful comparison with the Bristol mayoral and civic structures: Frost, "Urban Elite", 238-46; here, as elsewhere, such as Sandwich (Clarke, Pearson, Mate, Parfitt, Sandwich, 131), the methods of appointing civic officials appear to have been rather more democratic than in Bristol.

provides a unique insight into the contemporary understanding of the office and its powers.

In his opening description of the contents of the Quartum principale of the Kalendar, Ricart states that this section will show "howe thonnourable Maire, Shireef, Baillyfs, and other officers of this worshipfull Toune yerely been chosen and charged, and of thexecutinge of theire offices duringe theire yeres".[913] He leaves us in no doubt of the superiority of the first of these officials, describing the mayor as:

> ...the grete hedde Officer, Maire of Bristowe, owre souueraigne lorde the Kingeslieftennaunt and oure Alther Maistir for the yere beinge, in whome must rest thegrete substaunce of poletyk prouisioun, wise and discrete guydinge and surveyeng of all officers and others dependinge, concernynge the comune wele of the holebody of this saide worshipful Toune and procincte of the same. Quoniam in ipso et per ipsum et ad ipsum omnia, etc. Wherfore we al ar bounde hertilly to praie God for to preserue him, helpe, assist, and counsaille hym, that so diligently with grete instaunt coste and laboure shall apply hym to entende the honnoure, welth, and prosperitee of this noble Towne and of al the inhabitauntis of the same.[914]

The section ends here, without any matching eulogy of the other officials. The mayor is the king's deputy, and Ricart hopes that he will be guided by God. Significantly, he makes no mention of the possibility that he might also be guided by the common councillors, so that from this passage it seems that the mayor is expected to rule alone.

The new mayor was elected in the Guildhall on 15 September.[915] According to Ricart, he was chosen by the common councillors from two candidates: one proposed by the old mayor, one by the sheriff.[916] While the election was made by these men, the mayor exhorted the councillors "to pray the Holly Goste to be at their seid election", so the mayor was, to that extent, divinely ordained. A fortnight later, on Michaelmas morning, the new mayor was invested in office in the same place by the old mayor, before the common councillors and civic officials.

The event is depicted over a whole page of the The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar. This depiction can be read along two axes: reading from top to bottom reveals a descending hierarchy of political power; reading from left to right we see the passage of time being portrayed, as office is transferred from the old to the new mayor. There is a careful spatial arrangement of the elements within the image.

The page is divided into four horizontal bands. At the top is a panel containing three armorial shields bearing firstly, a red cross on a white background, secondly the royal arms, and finally the arms of Bristol. Below this the second band has at its centre the image of the previous mayor handing power to the new mayor, the pair flanked by five other figures; they all wear fur-trimmed scarlet cloaks. Below and in front of them is a table around which stand civic officers, denoted by their party-coloured robes, including serjeants-at-mace, the sword-bearer and the town clerk holding a book. To our right is a group of nine men also wearing scarlet gowns. The figures in this band are portrayed as smaller than the mayors and their companions, and this gradation in size

---

[913] Ricart's description of the mayor-making and the image of mayoral authority it presents are discussed in P. Fleming, "Telling Tales of Oligarchy in the Late Medieval Town", in *The Fifteenth Century, 2: Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England*, ed. Michael Hicks (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), 177-93, at 180-2.

[914] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 4-5.

[915] The procedures for the mayoral election and mayor-making are outlined in Ricart, *Kalendar*, 69-75.

[916] There appears to be no role for the burgesses as an electorate, in contrast to, for example, Norwich: Frost, "Urban Elite', 238.

operates between, on the one hand, the sword-bearer, a serjeant-at-mace standing immediately behind him and the town clerk, all three of whom stand behind the table and impinge somewhat into the space occupied by the mayors' party, and on the other those standing in front and below the table, who are depicted as smaller. The group of nine scarlet-clad figures to our right descend in size from top to bottom to broadly the same degree, so that the uppermost figures are of approximately the same size as the sword-bearer, serjeant-at-made and town clerk, and the lowermost match the dimensions of the figures below the table. Below the line of civic officers in front of the table is a barrier, delineating the fourth and final space, occupied by a group of men wearing civilian costume. Hence, according to standard medieval practice, there is a relationship between size and significance: the most important figures, those of the two mayors and their immediate companions, are the largest; those at the bottom of the picture are the smallest and least significant. However, the mayors do not stand in the uppermost band, comprising the panel bearing the three shields, and hence we are to assume that in the hierarchical scheme they come below the authority symbolised here.

The central shield, carrying the royal arms, presents a fairly unambiguous message: only by the authority devolved upon them by the king does Bristol's governing elite exercise their power. The Bristol arms might be read as suggesting that the town, as a corporate entity, is greater and more durable than any individual, no matter how much power he may exercise: under the royal dispensation, it is only through the legitimate, and hence legitimating, governing structures of the town that individuals hold their office and the powers and responsibilities associated with them, and while individuals come and go, Bristol, and its civic offices, endures. The red cross is a reference to the cross of St George, patron saint of England. The saint had special significance in Bristol's elite civic culture, as witnessed variously by the chapel of St George that adjoined the Guildhall, home to the merchants' fraternity of the same name, and functioning as a civic chapel for the use of the mayor and common councillors; by the mayor and common council's involvement in a procession in celebration of St George's day; and by the performance of a tableau of St George slaying the dragon for the entertainment and edification of Edward IV on his first royal visit in 1461.[917] St George's position as national patron saint was initially promoted by the royal family, and his inclusion in such civic contexts is interpreted by Professor Good as showing that:

> ...these corporations were partaking in an authority that devolved from the kingbut which they themselves exercised at the local level - in this way the use of St George was like the city charter itself, granted by the king but enacted by locals.[918]

As such, the juxtaposition of the cross of St George with the royal arms and those of Bristol constitutes a powerful visual representation of how the Bristol elite idealised their relationship with the Crown, a relationship to which the phrase formulated by White in the 1930s is entirely applicable: "self-government at the king's command".[919] St George was also a warrior-saint, during the Hundred Years' War an appropriate

[917] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 81; *LRBB*, vol. 1, 10-11 (record of 2 torches provided to each of the mayor and the sheriff on St George's Day, and of an 8 mark p.a. pension to the chaplain of St George), vol. 2, 235 (inventory of the goods of St George's chapel, 1466). St Ewen's also took part in the St George's day procession, suggesting that other parish churches did so too. See Good, *The Cult of St George*, 111.
[918] Good, *The Cult of St George*, 112.
[919] A. B. White, *Self-Government at the King's Command: A Study in the Beginnings of English Democracy* (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1933).

patron for a nation embroiled in protracted struggle with an implacable foe, and for a town that was very conscious of the major contribution it made to that effort. The implicit invocation of St George also provides the only visual indication of divine legitimation in this scene, apart from the fact that the new mayor is presumably swearing on a Bible. Given the saint's royal and national associations, even the specifically sacred aspect of his identity might be regarded as subsumed within an overwhelmingly secular representational scheme. While any posited distinction between sacred and secular can easily be pushed too far when discussing the later medieval representation, and actuality, of political authority, the absence from the scene of any priest or indication of ecclesiastical elements of legitimation is still noteworthy. Indeed, Bristol's visual shorthand, in the shape of its coat of arms, is also entirely secular, in contrast to many other towns and cities. The castle represents the town's strategic importance, the ship the commercial foundations of its prosperity, but the Church, the saints and God are conspicuous by their absence.[920] The correct inference to be drawn from these observations is not that Bristol's governing elite were impious, but that they were free of overt ecclesiastical control. Just as there is no castle constable in the mayor-making scene, neither is there a bishop. The lack of any specifically ecclesiastical, rather than religious, reference is unlikely to have been the product of mere oversight; rather, it reflected where the real political power lay. In the absence of a cathedral or other dominating centre of ecclesiastical power and authority within the town or its vicinity, Bristol's political culture was unusually "secular", in the sense of being independent of the influence of the institutional Church.[921] However, it was also suffused with religious ritual and sensibility, as is clear from Ricart's description.[922] This topmost panel then, represents perpetual, legitimising authority.

Immediately below stand the two mayors and their five companions, all dressed in fur-trimmed scarlet cloaks over scarlet gowns. The five probably represent councillors who had served as mayors in previous years, since their fur-trimmed gowns match Ricart's description of this item of clothing as being worn only by past and present mayors; their number suggests that they may be meant to represent the five ward aldermen (that is, excluding the recorder), all of whom, apparently, would have been former mayors.[923] Whether representing aldermen or simply past mayors, the figures still act as a reminder of the transience of office. The old mayor is depicted with grey hair, in contrast to the new mayor. While it may well be that a year of mayoral office induced more grey hairs than might be expected in less stressful positions, this detail is probably intended to stress the wisdom of the old mayor, but also to remind us

---

[920] For example, Derek Keene, "Text, Visualisation and Politics: London, 1150-1250", *TRHS,* Sixth Ser., 18 (2008), 69-99, at 77.

[921] The overwhelmingly secular character to early-Tudor Bristol's political life has also been noted by Robert Tittler, which as such he regards as having presaged later developments elsewhere: "… the sense of civic wholeness which in most towns still depended on the Church had in Bristol already begun to depend upon the civic magistracy. To the common run of fifteenth-century towns, Bristol represented the wave of the future": *The Reformation and the Towns in England: Politics and Political Culture, c.1540-1640* (OUP, 1998), 32-3.

[922] Burgess, "Repertory for Reinforcement", 90, 94-5.

[923] A scarlet fur-trimmed cloak was an article of clothing worn only by mayors. Ricart, *Kalendar*, 70-1, prescribes that a new mayor in his second or subsequent term of office was to wear his scarlet fur-trimmed cloak during the procession to the Guildhall; those councillors who had been mayor previously were to have their cloaks carried behind them by servants. Councillors who had never been mayors simply wore their scarlet gowns. For the importance of the fur-lined cloak as a mark of mayoral office, see Lee, "Political Communication", 234, 257-60. For the five ward aldermen's previous incarnations as mayors, see ibid., 215-6, 244-6.

that individual office-holders grow old, frail, and then eventually die, but the office itself carries on in perpetuity. For one year the man chosen to be mayor is the most powerful person in Bristol, but at the year's end he must relinquish that power.

The speech that Ricart gives the retiring mayor similarly emphasises the power of his office (as derived from royal authority), the transience of his occupation of it, and his own inevitable failings in its execution. Addressing those assembled in the Guildhall, he declares that:

> ...it is not owte of your remembraunce that this daie xii moneth, I, vnworthy, was sworn to be maire of this honourable Citie for this yere that is passid. And Sirs, if that I haue done, of my negligens and wilfulnes, otherwise than right lawe and goodconscience wolde to ony man or woman, I will pray theym come to me, and I shal be redy to make theym amendys in that I haue offendid theym, yf my goodes will suffice therto ... I am not sufficient ne can not thanke you of your godeness accordinge to youre due merits, for in you hath bene trewe obedience to kepe the king our alther liege lorde is lawes, and my commaundment in his name, at alltymes. For whiche, where as I am not able ne of power to deserve vnto you, I pray almighty God rewarde you with moche joy, prosperite, and peas, as evir hadcomens and true Cristen people.[924]

The correct behaviour for the mayor's fellow burgesses was to show complete obedience to him, as the king's lieutenant, at all times. Only after he had relinquished his office were any grievances to be presented, and they were to be presented to him, for his settlement, not to the common councillors, alderman, or even to the new mayor. There is no Bristol court of appeal against mayoral decisions. Exercising royal authority, and with the sole exception of the king himself, Bristol's mayor had no superior under God.[925] Once more, there is no mention of the common councillors giving counsel. The mayor must rule according to 'right lawe and good conscience', but there is no indication that the burgesses have any legitimate power to constrain him to do so, or to punish him if he does not, except, of course, that he exercises these great powers for twelve months only.[926] In addition, the mayor himself recognises that he is only human, and as such cannot live up to the ideals underwritten by royal authority and divine sanction. The process being portrayed, the transfer of authority from one individual to the next, embodies a duality between the perpetual authority of the mayoralty and the transient exercise of that authority by a succession of individual mayors. This concept might be described as the "mayor's two bodies", to adapt Kantorowicz's famous formulation: the one is the embodiment of the office of mayor, and is perpetual, while the other, that of the mere mortal executing the office, is all too transitory.[927]

Standing in front of the two mayors are the three civic officials: the sword-bearer, town clerk and a serjeant-at-mace. While depicted as smaller than the mayors, these are slightly larger than the common councillors standing to one side on our right. Given that they appear in a book compiled by the town clerk, it is tempting to assume

---

[924] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 71.

[925] Keith Lilley has pointed out the similarity between the outgoing mayor's speech and the incoming mayoral oath in the Kalendar and passages in Book Three of Brunetto Latini's Li Livre dou Tresor, as transmitted through the London Liber Custumarum; the Latini/Liber Custumarum text shares with Ricart a view of the mayoralty as being in some way divinely ordained: *City and Cosmos*, 135-8. Given that the Liber Custumarum was closely related to the Liber Albus, with which Ricart was very familiar, it is perfectly possible that the former influenced the form in which he recorded both the speech and the oath.

[926] For a discussion of later medieval concepts of kingship, see John Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (CUP, 1996), 16-39.

[927] Ernst H. Kantarowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (1st edn. 1957, 1997 edn., Princeton UP).

that this reflects his own estimation of the importance of himself and his fellow senior officials relative to the mayors, aldermen and councillors, but it is much more likely that this reflects the significance not of the individual office-holders or their offices, but of their function within this particular ceremony. The book held by the town clerk - Ricart himself, we can assume - evidently contains the text of the mayor's oath, which Ricart described as being read aloud by the town clerk as the new mayor rests his right hand on the Bible. The mayor's oath is contained within the Kalendar, and almost certainly it is this very book that is represented.[928] In which case, we must imagine that the Kalendar depicted here contains the very same mayor-making illustration, which scene would in turn contain its own representation of the same book, with the same illustration to be imagined within it, and so on, ad infinitum. This process of infinite regression is another evocation of the continuance of civic authority: both the ceremony and its depiction is perpetually repeated. Ricart and his contemporaries could imagine that it had been repeated every year since the first mayor recorded in the Kalendar, Adam le Page, in 1217, or indeed back to the Conquest, since he evidently believed that the mayoral line stretched back that far.[929] The unbroken succession of mayors given in the Chronicle section of the Kalendar reinforced the contrast between the transitory nature of individual human lives and the never-ending (it was hoped) office of the mayoralty.

The theme of loyalty expressed in the retiring mayor's speech is reiterated in the oath of the new mayor, this time stressing his loyalty to the king, with particular emphasis on the mayor's role as escheator: "And I shall do the kinges profite in all thinge3 that longith to me to done, bi my konnyng and my power. And I shall trewly kepe his rightes which that longeth to the Crowne".[930] However, the incoming mayor also pledged to protect the rights of widows and orphans (as guardian of the property of the orphan heirs to burgess estates), and to rule justly: "I shall trewly, and with right, trete the people of my bailly, and do every man right, as well to the poer as to the riche, in that that longeth to me to do", without favour or bribery, and according to the "laudable ordinaunce3". He also promised to "do my entier payne and diligence to put awey, cesse, and destruye, all maner heresies and errours, clepid openly lolladries", to assist the ecclesiastical authorities: "... And I shall be assistent to the Ordinaryes and her commissarie3 of holy chirche...", and to support "the Prioure and his brethern the prestis of the hous of the Kalenders of Bristowe ... as her verray patron...".[931] A loyal lieutenant of the king, partner in the labours of the Church to suppress heresy and patron of the Guild of Kalendars, the mayor stands at the fulcrum of temporal and spiritual authority within the town. Again, his cardinal powers are not limited by the express requirement to take counsel, although in their oaths of office the common councillors pledge themselves to offer the mayor their best advice: when summoned by the mayor, councillors pledged to "give trewe and hole counsel be all thour konnyng..

[928] Ricart states that the oaths of lesser civic officers are contained in the Red Book, as indeed they are, but this is not the case with the mayor's oath: *Kalendar*, 72; James Lee, "'Ye shall disturbe noe mans right': Oath-Taking and Oath-Breaking in Late Medieval and Early Modern Bristol", *Urban History*, 34:1 (2007), 27-38, at 29, and passim.

[929] In fact, the Bristol mayoralty was probably instituted under King John in 1216 with the appointment of Roger le Cordewaner: *Bristol Charters, 1378-1499*, 74-5.

[930] The oath's emphasis on the mayor's role as escheator seems at variance with the provisions of the 1373 Charter and 15th-century practice, neither of which suggest that this aspect of the office was as important: Lee, 'Political Communication", 229-31.

[931] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 73.

and ghif no parcial counsel for loue, fauour, broacage nor hate of no person".[932] While the councillors must offer counsel when asked, the mayor is under no obligation to ask for it, listen to it or act upon it. His promise to rule justly and according to the law in the interests of people and church no more diminished the mayor's power or freedom of movement than did similar commitments on the part of kings. Indeed, with their lack of expectation that the mayor should take counsel from his advisors, the speeches of the outgoing mayor and the mayoral oath of office actually assume a greater level of freedom for Bristol's mayor within his own jurisdiction than that which contemporary 'mirrors for princes' literature expected to be exercised by wise and just kings.[933]

After the new mayor had taken his oath, the old mayor was to deliver to him "the kynges Swerde, and his hatte".[934] Both are depicted in the image. They are held by the sword bearer. The sword and grey fur hat, or cap of maintenance, had both been granted by the king as a sign of Bristol's special status: the sword would be carried before the mayor, along with the cap. Ricart also states that the new mayor is to receive a casket containing various official seals, including those of the Statutes Merchant and Staple, but it is not clear if this is represented. The illustration shows a number of objects on the table: a parchment roll, a pen case and ink-well, a bag tied at the top with a red cord, and a rectangular object with a grid design and a strap. Conceivably the last could represent the casket while the bag could contain the seals and normally be kept inside. Conversely, given the rectangular object's grid pattern, it might be a folded chequer cloth, used for casting accounts, of the sort that gave the Exchequer its name.

Five of the civic officers standing in front of the table carry maces, and they and another three mace-bearers depicted elsewhere in the illustration are presumably serjeants-at-mace, charged with executing the mayor, sheriff and common council's commands and with keeping order. The barrier between them and the civilians at the bottom of the image may represent the outer wall of the Guildhall, cut away so we can see inside, in which case the structural feature surmounted by an arch to our left would be the doorway, guarded by a serjeant-at-mace. Thus, by this interpretation, the mayor-making took place in private, behind the closed doors of the Guildhall, and would have been witnessed only by the civic officials and councillors. Those not within this charmed circle had to stand outside and await the new mayor's appearance. However, Ricart describes the mayor-making as taking place "byfore all the ... Comyns". If by this word he means all the population of Bristol then we must imagine a large number crowding into the Guildhall, obviously not the entire population, and in fact probably limited to burgesses. If this were the case then the barrier depicted here might be the bar that would have stood between judges and defendants when the building was used as a court of law. On the other hand, Ricart may have been thinking in more exclusive terms, so that "Comyns" was intended to refer only to the common councillors, in which case the first interpretation would stand, and we are presented with the depiction of a ceremony that took place behind closed doors: only after the transformation was complete, and the new mayor came through the outer door of the Guildhall onto Broad

[932] *LRBB*, vol. 1, 1; Lee, "Political Communication", 206-7.

[933] Lee, "Political Communication", 232-3; Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books: Ideals and Reality in the Life and Library of a Medieval Prince* (Stroud: Sutton, 1997), 105-33; Judith Furster, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania UP, 1996), particularly 44-9. Lilley suggests that later medieval mayors were regarded as analogous to kings within their much smaller register, divinely ordained and exercising quasi-royal power (devolved, of course, from the king) within their territory, as a kind of microcosm of kingship, which in turn was a microcosm of God's rule over His creation: *City and Cosmos*, 142-3.

[934] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 74.

Street, would the waiting crowds become part of the ceremony. The latter possibility accords with the overall tone of Bristol's civic oaths and elite culture: members of Bristol's civic and guild governing elites pledged their primary loyalty, after the king, to the elite community of which they were part rather than to the wider urban community, and in many cases an aspect of that loyalty was a commitment to maintain the confidentiality of their proceedings.[935] Government was an arcane art whose secrets were not to be shared with the governed.

After the Guildhall ceremony and the dinner that followed, the mayors, common councillors and civic officials assembled at the High Cross and processed up the hill to St Michael's church, where they made offerings. They then dispersed to hear evensong in their own parish churches. Over the following four days the civic officials, chantry priests and guild masters were sworn in before the mayor.[936] In these three groups we see that the mayor's authority extended not only to the personnel of civic government, but also to the pious provisions made by the burgesses and to their craft organisations. The mayor stood at the head of the town's political, commemorative and economic activity, and there would have been few aspects of the lives of its citizenry that totally escaped his purview. At least, this is the impression created by Ricart's text: we must now consider the structures through which the mayor was able to turn these ceremonial or symbolic claims into practical political power. Much of the mayor's power derived from his position as senior magistrate, as established by the 1373 charter, and so our consideration begins with Bristol's law courts.

The court of the Mayor and Sheriff - the "Mayor's Court" - was established by the 1373 Charter. From 1449, if not before, it dealt with actions of trespass and deceit, all cases arising from alleged violation of a statute, and those which formerly, before 1446, would have come under Admiralty jurisdiction. The mayor and sheriff, sitting as a Hundred Court, constituted a court of probate and a registry of deeds for all Bristol property.[937] The mayor also had responsibility for safeguarding the property rights of the orphans of Bristol burgesses ("orphan" being defined as the under-age heir to a deceased father, irrespective of whether or not the mother was still alive), a power established by charter in 1331.[938] The Mayor's Court was superior to the other Bristol courts and could call cases from them for review and enact procedural reforms in these lesser jurisdictions.[939] Actions of debt upon written obligation went to the Staple Court, over which, as Mayor of the Staple, the mayor also presided.[940]

Cases under Law Merchant, that is, actions of debt, detinue, covenant and account without written obligation, were heard in the market courts of Tolsey and Piepowder, which were not mayoral courts.[941] Both the Tolsey and Piepowder were royal courts, and before 1461, when the king retained the farm of the borough, they would have been presided over by a royal steward and their revenues paid into the royal coffers. Usually, even when the king did not lease the fee farm the stewardships were leased to prominent Bristolians. In 1461 the lease of the fee farm was granted permanently to the mayor and common council. Thereafter the mayor presided over

---

[935] Lee, "'Ye shall disturbe noe mans right'", 30-2.
[936] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 75-8.
[937] Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 28-9, 47, 62, 182; *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 16, 46-51, and 54-5 for Bristol's courts in general.
[938] Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 78-9. The Great Orphan Book is BRO JOr/1/1 (Great Orphan Book and Book of Wills No 1: 1380 – 1633).
[939] GRBB, *Text, Part 3*, 14-17; Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 159-60.
[940] Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 31-2; *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 17-24.
[941] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 55.

these courts as well. The Tolsey Court offered relatively swift and cheap justice in commercial disputes: actions were usually initiated by a verbal plaint rather than a written bill; most pleadings occurred without attorneys, and were decided in part through the examination of witnesses rather than through a succession of compurgators. The Tolsey Court was very popular, and the extant records show that in the later fifteenth century it dealt with over five hundred cases a year: Bristol's commercial society was evidently keenly litigious, particularly when it is considered that many disputes would have been settled by arbitration, and so might not be recorded.[942] When fairs were in progress the Tolsey was suspended in favour of a Piepowder court.

In addition to their jurisdiction over cases of trespass, deceit, and mercantile law cases, the 1373 Charter gave the mayor and sheriff the powers of keepers of the peace to investigate, indict and imprison suspected felons. However, while they were magistrates they could not pass judgement upon felons, but had to await their delivery from gaol by a central court justice, with whom the mayor sat at sessions of gaol delivery.[943] The central crown courts at Westminster reserved the right to summon cases for review and correction and to hear appeals from the Bristol courts.[944]

Thus, after 1461 Bristol's mayor presided over all of the Bristol's borough courts, as well as sitting as a keeper of the peace with crown judges at sessions of gaol delivery, thereby exercising great power within his jurisdiction. While the 1373 charter's concession that no burgess was able to plead outside of Bristol's courts, nor was liable to be so impleaded, might appear to have largely insulated the borough's courts from external jurisdiction, in practice the visits of justices of gaol delivery and the frequent employment of writs of certiorari and other legal devices to bring Bristol cases before central crown courts gave practical effect in the legal sphere to the claims made in Ricart's text: the mayor acknowledged only the Crown as his superior, but to that superior he had to defer as a loyal and obedient servant.

Ricart's account creates the impression that the Common Council was at the mayor's beck and call, and this is borne out by the fifteenth-century evidence. While there are no extant minutes of council meetings before the sixteenth century, there is nothing to indicate that councillors could meet without the mayor's summons, nor that there was a regular timetable of meetings; instead, meetings were called by the mayor on an ad hoc basis. Common Council was thus an essentially passive body, expected to give the mayor, collectively, advice when required, and to ensure that his government ran smoothly. While the evidence does not allow us to be certain, it appears that councillors served for life and were chosen by the mayor and sheriff, rather than being co-opted by existing members. If so, then Bristol's practice would have been more restrictive - more "oligarchic" - than most comparable English towns and cities in the same period, where an element of election operated.[945]

Bailiffs and sheriffs were chosen from among the common councillors, and there was a clear progression evident in their appointment. The precise role of fifteenth-century bailiffs is unclear, but they appear to have exercised some kind of general financial and judicial management in support of the mayor and sheriff.[946] This office

[942] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 3*, 6-11, 33-46; Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 29, 163, 165.
[943] Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 49.
[944] Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 78, 29-30, 159, 166-8.
[945] This paragraph follows Lee, "Political Communication", 204-9, rather than Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 56, and *Widening Gate*, 163.
[946] Lee, "Political Communication", 211-12.

was the most junior of the three, and all councillors who subsequently progressed to the shrievalty and mayoralty began as bailiffs. The average age of bailiffs was probably around the high twenties, and this office would have come soon after the individual became a councillor.[947] Given that each year there were two bailiffs but only one sheriff and one mayor, that individuals held office as bailiff only once, and that a minority held two or more mayoralties, for most councillors bailiff was as high as they got in the civic cursus honorum. While the success with which a bailiff executed his term of office may have determined his chances of future promotion, wealth and connections would almost certainly have played their part as well. Those who progressed further tended to form an inner elite. From 1470 to 1499 Dr Lee has calculated that on average a sheriff took office around eight years after becoming bailiff, and that an individual's first mayoralty took place nearly six years after he held the shrievalty. In the period 1450 to 1499, again following Lee, while a little under half (nearly 44%) of individuals who became mayors held office only once, the remainder held mayoral office for up to five times, with most of this group, predictably, serving twice.[948] The mayoralty was thus the culmination of the civic careers of a tiny minority of burgesses. Over the course of the whole fifteenth century Bristol's political life was dominated by a group of just over sixty wealthy men who had achieved mayoral office. To judge by sixteenth-century evidence, the vast majority of these would have been involved in the distributive, rather than manufacturing, sector: merchants, that is, wholesale export-import dealers, and major retailers.[949]

The mayor was responsible for setting the standard weights of bread and prices for ale, wood and coal.[950] While it was the craft guilds, in Bristol as in most other large towns and cities, which were the fundamental institutions for the regulation of urban economic life, enforcing standards and, where necessary, regulating participation in their particular crafts in an effort to protect the livelihoods of their members, they did so as the junior partners of civic government.[951] By 1450 there were twenty craft guilds in Bristol. Three, those of the tailors, cordwainers, and corvesors, were chartered by royal letters patent which gave them a constitutional legitimacy independent of the mayor, but these, along with the other guilds, still came within the terms of a statute of 1436/7 which subjected their rules and regulations to the authority of mayor and common council for the purposes of correction and reformation. While there is very little extant evidence for the internal workings of Bristol's guilds before the 1490s beyond the regulations and ordinances recorded in the civic Red Books, this latter source provides a considerable corpus of material. From these it is clear that, while there was great diversity between different guilds, they also shared certain common characteristics. They all had an annually-elected administration, and in almost all cases it was explicitly stated that their chief officials to be sworn before the mayor, and that violations of guild ordinances were to be presented for punishment before the mayor in the Guildhall; in most cases fines were to be divided equally between the town, and used for the relief of the poor, and the guild. That the craft guilds habitually registered their ordinances in the civic archive, and sought the approval and warranty of the mayor and common council for their activity, is an important indication of the relationship between

[947] Lee, "Political Communication", 242; Beetham-Fisher, "Merchants of Medieval Bristol", 100.
[948] Lee, 'Political Communication", 242-4.
[949] Lee, "Political Communication", 184-6.
[950] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 84-5.
[951] Unless otherwise stated, this paragraph is based on Lee, "Political Communication", pp. 171-8, and Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 123.

town and guild. Unlike their counterparts in some other towns and cities in later medieval England, Bristol's guilds were entirely dependent on civic authority. Their dependence was perhaps reflected in their administrative structures and political culture, which seem to have operated as almost a mirror image of civic government. Bristol's guilds, it seems, were run by a small oligarchy of senior masters who exercised very considerable power over the rest of the craft. Thus, when in 1463-4 the lesser members of the Weavers' guild complained to the mayor and common council that the four master-craftsmen ruling over them were making unreasonable demands, and were chosen annually "...notte by the wille and assent of the hole crafte butt by the xij men sucche as they wolle calle thaym self", they were rebuffed, and the arrangement of which they complained was confirmed by the civic authority: henceforth these four, and "xij the mooste saddyst notable suffycyaunt and Credyble persoones" of the weavers' craft, would appoint the guild's governing body.[952] Such small numbers, from four to fourteen governors, seem to have been typical of Bristol's craft guilds.

The relative weakness of Bristol's craft guilds as alternative foci of loyalty and power to the civic elite is further suggested by sixteenth-century evidence for the occupational backgrounds of senior civic officials. While merchants - large-scale wholesale retailers - dominated civic office, there is little sign that within this broad category the elite favoured fellow guild members in such matters as contracting apprenticeships. Identification with one's guild was secondary to identification with the elite as a whole. This presents something of a contrast to towns such as York and Norwich, where particular groups defined by their guild membership tended to dominate the civic governing elite.[953]

As well as supervising the guilds, Bristol's civic government also controlled access to the freedom.[954] Admittance to the freedom brought with it the privilege of buying and selling by retail without restriction.[955] The criteria for membership dated back at least to 1344 and would remain largely unchanged into the eighteenth century: individuals could be admitted as burgesses through a successfully-completed apprenticeship; marriage to a burgess's daughter or widow; patrimony, admission as the son of a burgess, and redemption, or the simple purchase of the freedom. In all four cases it was important that the new burgess was already known and acceptable to the burgess community. This even applied to redemption. While this might seem to have been a purely economic transaction, in fact the redemptioner was required to find two burgesses to testify to his suitability, and to stand as his sureties: should he later be judged unworthy, these burgesses could be fined. In the fourteenth century the redemption payment was the substantial sum of £10, ensuring that, if nothing else, the redemptioner was wealthy, and serious about joining the freedom. From the early fifteenth century redemptioners could only be admitted by corporate consent of the mayor, sheriff, and common council, and the mayor could be fined £10 for allowing a redemptioner admittance without this safeguard.

At first sight Ricart's statement that the chantry priests presented themselves before the mayor to take their oaths seems incongruous, since the mayor clearly did not exercise any spiritual authority over them. However, he did have oversight of the properties that constituted the chantries' endowments (a fee was paid into the town coffers in recognition of his supervision), and he was the ultimate guarantor that the

[952] *GRBB*, *Text, Part 1*, 67-9.
[953] Lee, "Political Communication", 183-92.
[954] Unless otherwise stated, this paragraph is based on Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 103-8.
[955] See Sacks, *Trade, Society and Politics*, vol. 1, 112-17 for the restrictions applied to non-burgess traders.

chantry founder's wishes were adhered to. In addition, in the case of Canynges' chantries at least, the mayor also presided over their annual audit.[956]

Below the level of mayor and common council, and operating alongside the guilds, Bristol's eighteen parishes provided the lowest level of urban administration.[957] While the parish shouldered an increasing administrative burden from the Henrician Reformation onwards, even in the fifteenth century Bristol's parishes seem to have provided the first rung on the ladder of the civic cursus honorum, most obviously through the office of churchwarden. For many, if not most, churchwardens this was as far as they would ever progress. The office of churchwarden is the most obvious of those associated with parish administration because each year the two churchwardens in each parish presented their accounts for audit, and large numbers of these accounts have survived from the later middle ages onwards. However, within the parish was an elite group, known as the 'masters of the parish', drawn from among the wealthiest parishioners, who appear to have supervised the work of the churchwardens and to have acted as feoffees for the property of the parish church. Through their latter function it is often possible to identify them, since they appear in parish property records. In turn, the masters might also appear among the civic elite as common councillors or senior office holders. Dr Lee has found that the contribution of parishes to the civic elite was not uniform: the wealthier, central parishes tended to provide relatively more individuals to the common council and senior official posts in proportion to their population than the poorer. Nor did he find that the distribution of office within the parish was uniform; rather, as a general rule office within the wealthier parishes was restricted to a smaller proportion of the parish population than was the case in Bristol's poorer parishes, so that in the latter relatively more parishioners were churchwardens. So, the intensely hierarchical and oligarchic nature of civic government was mirrored at parish level: there was a hierarchy of parishes in terms of their contribution to civic office, and oligarchic tendencies within the parish tended to intensify from the poorer to the richer. In addition, on the basis of evidence from wills and property records, Lee concludes that for the early Tudor period as a whole Bristol's elite, that is those who were masters within the wealthier parishes and holders of senior positions within the civic hierarchy, associated with their socio-economic equals from across the town - their fellow oligarchs - to a far greater extent than with their fellow parishioners. While their links with their less substantial neighbours were weaker, these same wealthy individuals often lavished a significant amount of both their attention and their wealth on their parish church. If it is possible to talk of a "typical" member of the Bristol elite, then it would probably be correct to say that his horizons encompassed the whole town, and in terms of his commercial life extended far beyond its walls, and so transcended any "parish community" that may have existed. His commitment to his parish church may have taken the form of a proprietorial relationship: it may not be overly cynical to assume that he thought his parish church worth beautifying in part because this reflected well on him and his family as its patron. One might also speculate on the nature of his relationship with the parish priest. As a

[956] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 76, 77 n., 79; Lee, "Political Communication", 142.

[957] While Bristol's five wards were already in existence by the fifteenth century, their administrative functions are obscure, and were not of sufficient importance to have left much of a mark on the civic archive before 1499. This paragraph is drawn from Lee, "Political Communication", Chapter 4, and from Burgess, "Pre-Reformation Churchwardens' Accounts and Parish Government: Lessons from London and Bristol", *EHR*, 117 (2002), 307-32. The work of Clive Burgess has been fundamental to our understanding of the importance of masters within later medieval parish administration.

parish master our 'typical' elite Bristolian would have been used to lording it over the churchwardens; how often might he have felt that the clerical incumbent should also do his bidding?

The depiction of the mayor-making in the Kalendar therefore presents an image of the central event not only in the civic year but also within the town's secular hierarchy as a whole. The dominating figures of the mayors, past and present, with the other common councillors and civic officers below them, with the ordinary burgesses shown on a much smaller scale at the bottom of the image, reflects the deeply hierarchical nature of Bristol society, particularly if one considers who is not represented. Assuming that this image is indeed supposed to represent the entirety of Bristol's political society, that is, those thought to have had any kind of legitimate role in the town's government at any level from parish to mayoralty, then notable by their absence are the clergy, those adult male Bristolians excluded from the freedom because they were not burgesses, and of course, women and children. Bristol's officially recognised "political society", even defined in its widest sense, constituted but a small minority of the town's total population.

Asserting Civic Power

The fact that the mayor presided over a panoply of borough courts meant that, after 1461 at least, he sat in judgement on his fellow citizens every weekday, unless proceedings were suspended for major religious festivals and processions.[958] Thus, Bristolians would have been constantly reminded of the power that the mayor exercised over them as the town's chief magistrate. The courthouse in the Tolsey, open to the street and located at the very centre of town, was a place in which justice could be seen to be done, and the mayor be seen as the individual doing it. In addition, Bristol's public theatre of punishment meant that the juridical power of the mayor was seen in the streets on a regular basis.

Those who fell foul of the mayor's assizes of bread and ale might find themselves incarcerated in the Winch Street lock-up - Worcestre's "Domus justicie & officij Collistrigij" - and exposed on the pillory that stood above it.[959] The lock-up was probably built following the granting of a charter of 1347 which sanctioned the building of such a structure in order to imprison 'nightwalkers' and other malefactors; the same charter also allowed the mayor to punish bakers found to have been selling under-weight bread by drawing them through the streets on a hurdle, with one of the offending loaves tied around their necks.[960]

While the business of the commercial courts resulted in neither such public humiliation nor any form of corporal punishment, it was a very different story with the sessions of gaol delivery, on whose bench the mayor sat alongside itinerant central court justices. Gaol delivery took place twice a year. Six Bristol gaol delivery rolls are extant for the fifteenth century, covering an eleven-year period from 1466 to 1477, and

[958] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 82-5. Sittings of the Staple Court were often adjourned while processions took place: *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 168-71 (including adjournments for processions occasioned by the Battle of the Spurs and Flodden, 1514).

[959] For the London pillory and other forms of public humiliation as punishment in the city, see Frank Rexroth, *Deviance and Power in Late Medieval London* (CUP, 2007), 110-21.

[960] Such public humiliation may not only have been reserved for dishonest bakers: Fleming, "Processing Power", 145-7.

providing some insight into this aspect of the town's provision of justice.[961] In addition to the mayor, the commissioners of gaol delivery for this period always included Sir Richard Choke, the prominent north-Somerset justice.[962] The rest were drawn from Bristol's civic elite: Nicholas Harvey, the Bristol recorder was among them, until his death at Tewkesbury in 1471, as were John Shipward senior, Philip Mede, Thomas Yonge, John Twynyho, Robert Straunge, William Spenser, and John Hawkes, the last three of whom also figured as mayors. The accused were first indicted before the mayor and sheriff as keepers of the peace before being consigned to the town gaol (by the 1460s in Newgate) to await the gaol delivery session. The sheriff also officiated at the sessions, which were held in the Guildhall. Thus, with the exception of Choke, who in any case was hardly a stranger to the town, the sessions of gaol delivery were entirely in the hands of the mayor and a select band of his fellow common councillors. Forty-three cases are legible, in whole or in part, over the six gaol delivery rolls, an average of a little over seven each (there are only one or two illegible cases in each roll); with sessions every six months there would thus have been on average between fourteen and twenty cases a year, taking into account the illegible ones. While a minority of cases involved more than one defendant, most were brought against single individuals. They were accused of a range of crimes, from murder to theft, but most involved theft, burglary or livestock rustling. In seven cases the verdict is illegible. Of the remaining 36, in 21 the jury brought in a guilty verdict, with the defendants in the other 15 cases being found innocent. Those condemned without sufficient real property or moveable goods were sentenced to hang, and this seems to have been the fate of all of those found guilty at these particular sessions. So, each session, on average, might have produced up to four executions. Those sentenced to hang would have been taken back to the gaol while preparations were made, before being led up to the gallows on St Michael's Hill.[963] Despite the presence of Justice Choke in the Guildhall, as far as onlookers along the route from Newgate to St Michael's Hill were probably concerned, it was the mayor's justice that was being meted out to the condemned felons: during his term of office, the mayor exercised the power of life and death over his fellow Bristolians.

Spectators of public punishments, whether carried out by pillory, hurdle or gallows, would doubtless have been expected to conclude that crimes and misdemeanors were punished rigorously, but fairly, at the hands of the mayor and his senior colleagues. In this predominantly non-literate culture, the visual was a crucial means of communication. Processions were an extremely effective means of impressing upon the literate and non-literate alike some basic messages. A miscreant baker being dragged through the streets, or a condemned felon following his own via dolorosa to the gallows, were but two of a whole range of different forms of procession that were a regular part of town life. At Corpus Christi there was a procession which, although organised and led by ecclesiastics, also included participants from the guilds and, probably, from the mayor and common council.[964] The latter certainly participated in the St George's Day procession, which may have had a more civic character. Processions

[961] TNA JUS 3/20/5-10.

[962] For Choke and his circle, see Rosemary Reeves, "Social Networks of Fifteenth-Century Somerset Gentry" (unpublished University of the West of England M.Phil. thesis, 2012), passim.

[963] For the procession to the gallows, see Fleming, "Processing Power", 148-53.

[964] P. G. Cobb, "The Corpus Christi Procession in Bristol", in *Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol*, ed. Bettey, 85-97; *REED*: *Bristol*, 13-26; an account of the expense incurred by the parish of St John the Baptist by participation in the Corpus Christi procession is BRO P/ST.JB/ChW/1, f. 11r. For Corpus Christi, see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (CUP, 1991), 240-71.

could also be organised to mark particular military victories and other major national events. However, Bristol appears to have had a far less developed ceremonial cycle of ecclesiastical and guild processions and other events. Instead, Bristol's public ceremonial was dominated, not by the Church or the guilds, but by the mayor and common council.[965]

In addition to the Michaelmas civic procession from the Guildhall to St Michael's Church, Ricart records that the mayor made three more ceremonial excursions to the outer reaches of his town.[966] These all occurred in November. On All Souls' Day (2 November) he visited St Mary Redcliffe where, at least by Ricart's time, he audited the accounts of the keepers of the two Canynges chantries. Twenty days later, on St Clement's Eve, he processed to St Bartholomew's Hospital in whose chapel of St Clement he heard evensong, and in the morning heard mass. The following day, on St Katherine's Eve, he passed over Bristol Bridge to Temple Church, where he heard mass in the weavers' guild chapel of St Katherine, in whose guildhall he and his party were then entertained with roaring fires, wine and spiced cake bread.

There are at least two ways of looking at these processions. For Professor Sacks they are manifestations of civic harmony, symbolically binding Bristol's suburbs to the ancient central core, and asserting the essential unity of the town and county under the benign rule of its mayor.[967] Another way to view them, however, is as assertions of mayoral authority over those areas of Bristol that had once been separate, if not antagonistic, to the ancient heart of the town, and which perhaps had the potential to be so again. The processions at Michaelmas to St Michael's and at All Souls' to St Mary's brought the mayor close to the northern and southern boundaries of his jurisdiction, and in both cases into territory over which the Berkeleys had once been dominant. St Bartholomew's Hospital, in the northern suburb, seems to have been located in an area which the abbot of St Augustine's (itself, of course, a Berkeley foundation), continued to regard as being within his sphere of influence.[968] Meanwhile, the St Katherine's procession brought the mayor into the liberty of the Temple, since the early fourteenth century maintained by the Knights of St John. While there is little indication of friction between the mayor and the Knights in the fifteenth century, a bitter conflict would arise in the 1530s.[969] Thus, these processions, while in every case having a religious ceremony as their end-point, may nonetheless have conveyed a very secular message, asserting the mayor's right to exercise his authority over every part of his jurisdiction.[970]

---

[965] Fleming, "Processing Power", 163-5.

[966] For this paragraph see Ricart, *Kalendar*, 79-81; Fleming, "Processing Power", 153; Skeeters, *Community and Clergy*, 30-2.

[967] D. H. Sacks, "The Demise of the Martyrs: The Feasts of St Clement and St Katherine in Bristol, 1400-1600", *Social History*, 11 (1986), 141-69.

[968] *Adams's Chronicle*, ed. Fox, 184-5, recounts how, following a dispute between the last abbot and the mayor over their respective liberties, it was agreed that henceforth the abbot and canons would meet the mayor and common councilors every Easter at the Grammar School, then housed in one of the towers at the northern end of the Frome Bridge.

[969] Fleming, "Sanctuary and Authority", 80-3. That the Knights took pains in their admissions to their liberty is indicated by a record of proceedings in 1501 before their court of the view of frank pledge when a Bristol burgess, John Vaghan, produced evidence that he held a tenement in Temple Street so that he could be admitted to the liberty there: BRO 26166/199.

[970] In pre-Reformation Coventry a number of ceremonies similarly reasserted the city's relationship with its county: Charles Phythian-Adams, "Ceremony and the Citizen: The Communal Year at Coventry, 1450-1550", in *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700*, ed. P. Clark and P. Slack (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 57-85, repr. in *The Medieval Town*, ed.Holt and Rosser, 238-64, at 261-2.

Contesting Civic Power

Despite his considerable powers, the mayor's authority within his town was not absolute, even as a representative of royal government. For one thing, the practical, physical means by which he could enforce his will were strictly limited: according to an ordinance of 1391, the town's 'police force' consisted of just eight sergeants: four of the Mayor's Court and four of the Tolsey.[971] For another, secular authority was exercised alongside that of the Church.

The existence within the county of sanctuaries and ecclesiastical liberties could, on occasion, be perceived as posing a serious threat to the mayor's authority. All churches and churchyards could offer forty days' sanctuary, during which period the sanctuary-man was supposed to confess his guilt to the coroner before abjuring the realm through the nearest seaport. The institution of sanctuary posed a potential challenge to the secular authorities, and at times this could result in violent clashes.[972] Bristol was not immune to such tensions. In a Chancery suit brought in 1465/6 the master of Bristol's Dominicans alleged that after a number of prisoners had escaped from Newgate and taken sanctuary in the friary the gaoler, in an attempt to recover his former charges and thereby minimise the damage caused by his negligence, laid siege to the house with sixty heavily-armed men who scaled the walls with ladders, "with strong shetyng of arowes ... as it had be in landes of warre", and then broke through the gates and menaced the friars who had taken shelter in the choir of their church, forcing them to give up the prisoners.[973]

Such tensions could be heightened when a church claimed the right to offer fugitives from temporal justice a permanent sanctuary, based on the possession of a liberty, a bundle of privileges that exempted its holder from the secular jurisdiction within which it was located. Such was the case with two ecclesiastical institutions within the county of Bristol. One was "St John's Hold", the liberty of the Knights of St John in and around Temple Street; the other was the precinct and adjoining Green of St Augustine's Abbey. In addition to sanctuary, both liberties claimed the right to hold markets and assizes of bread and ale. While conflict between the mayor and the Knights of St John appears not to have arisen until the 1530s, tensions between town and abbey over its liberty seem to date to at least the 1440s, and erupted into a violent clash on the Green in 1496.[974] Antagonism between town and abbey long predated this, with the abbey's Treen Mills as one bone of contention: this was subject to an attack in 1399 led by Mayor John Canynges, who objected to the extension of the mills, which allegedly blocked rights of way and posed competition to the town's Castle Mills. The Treen Mills were attacked again in 1428, 1452 and 1468.[975]

The hospital of St John the Baptist was another religious institution that aroused the ire of Bristol's civic elite in the period from 1398 to 1413.[976] While the jurisdictional

---

[971] *LRBB*, vol. 2, 64-5.
[972] Gervase Rosser, "Sanctuary and Social Negotiation in Medieval England", in *The Cloister and the World: Essays in Medieval History in Honour of Barbara Harvey*, ed. J. Blair & B. Golding (OUP, 1996), 56-79; P. I. Kaufman, "Henry VII and Sanctuary", *Church History*, 53 (1984), 465-76; Isobel D. Thornley, "The Destruction of Sanctuary", in *Tudor Studies Presented ... to A. F. Pollard* ed. R. W. Seton-Watson (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1924), 182-207.
[973] TNA C1/31/531-2; Fleming, "Sanctuary and Authority", 74.
[974] Fleming, "Sanctuary and Authority", 74-84; Fleming, "Conflict and Urban Government".
[975] Bettey, *Morning Stars of the Reformation*, 22-3.
[976] Price and Ponsford, *St Bartholomew's Hospital, Bristol,* 213, 228; Appendix III.

claims of St Augustine's Abbey, as the most powerful religious house in the area, seem to have been seen as challenging the mayor's position within the county, tension may only occasionally have flared up into open violence, and there is little evidence that a state of tension between the civic elite and other ecclesiastical institutions was a normal state of affairs. As we have seen in the case of William Canynges, relations between the mayor and the bishop of Worcester could be very close. On the whole, therefore, it would probably be incorrect to see Bristol's civic and ecclesiastical elites embroiled in a mutually antagonistic state as an inevitable consequence of their relative constitutional positions.

Fifteenth-century Bristol, like all other medieval communities, had its share of conflicts between laity and clergy at a level below that of mayor and prelate. A number of well-documented examples concern the parishes of St Ewen, All Saints and of St John the Baptist. In the St Ewen's case, a dispute over the payment of rent by a wealthy parishioner, John Sharpe, resulted in a settlement presided over by serjeant-at-law Thomas Yonge in 1463, an occasion described in great detail in the St Ewen's Church Book, on whose compiler Yonge's appearance made a considerable impression.[977] At All Saints', the sons of two parishioners, John Haddon and Agnes Fyler, reneged on promises of bequests of property to the church made separately by their parents, with the result that the sons, Richard Haddon and Thomas Fyler, were involved in litigation with the parish.[978] Finally, in 1497 William Thomas, rector of the church of St John the Baptist, claimed before King's Bench that in November of that year he had been leading his usual procession from his church to its churchyard, situated at the end of present-day Tailor's Court, an alley running alongside "Hasardestenement" that led off from Broad Street, intending to process around the churchyard and say prayers for the souls of those buried there, when the group were attacked by a number of apprentice tailors, who had emerged from the Tailors' Guildhall that occupied part of the tenement. According to Thomas, he successfully resisted the apprentices' attempt to steal the silver processional cross, and then retreated to his church, where he had remained, too frightened to relinquish this sanctuary. The incident was probably part of a long-running dispute between the church and the tailors that began with the gift of the land for the churchyard made by Edmund Arthur in 1390, and its consecration in 1409: the tailors, it seems, disputed St John's right to hold the land as its churchyard.[979]

All of these cases revolved around disputed property, not theology or the exercise of authority, and there is little here to demonstrate anything like "anticlericalism" as a general principle, as opposed to grudges over individual clerics or their institutions. Such disputes, from the mayor's with the abbey to a squabble over a patch of land at the end of a courtyard, could result in crown involvement in Bristol affairs as the result of an appeal to the royal council or central courts. This provides another reminder that for all the rhetoric surrounding his office, and his undoubted real power, the mayor could not rule without taking account of alternative sources of authority, royal or ecclesiastical.

While there is nothing in the disputes discussed above to indicate either heterodoxy or anticlericalism, both are found within the substance of accusations made against alleged Lollards within fifteenth-century Bristol. Those espousing heretical and

[977] Masters & Ralph (eds.), *Church Book of St Ewen's*, xxix-xxxii.
[978] Burgess, *Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints'*, *Part 1*, xvii-xviii.
[979] TNA KB9/414/28-9; Eric J. Boore, *Excavations at Tower Lane, Bristol* (Bristol: City of Bristol and Art Gallery/Bristol Threatened History Soc., 1984), 7. The churchyard is included in the return of a 1411 inquisition into the property of the Fraternity of St John: *LRBB,* vol. 2, 55-7.

anticlerical views were of course primarily rebelling against the Church, but it is evident from the mayor's oath that he was also expected to assist in their suppression. In addition, since heresy was a statutory felony incorrigible Lollards could be handed over to the secular authorities for execution. So, Bristol Lollards could have been seen as rebels against the civic, as well as the ecclesiastical, authorities.

There were other motives for opposition to the mayor. To judge by his poems, the author of Richard the Redeless and Mum and the Sothsegger was a Bristol common councillor and former MP who had become disillusioned with what he saw as a corrupt and compromised civic elite.[980] As we have seen, in the mid-1450s Henry May and his fellow Irish burgesses were alienated by the mayor and common council's persecution of their ethnic minority, while May's later opposition to the dominant faction within the civic elite, like the antagonism of Thomas Norton, among others, was prompted by political differences during the Wars of the Roses. While the frequent claims by plaintiffs in Chancery that they were forced to bring their suits to this court because of the mayor's partiality may in most cases have been no more than legal manoeuvres to justify moving the case out of the borough courts, they are so common that one must suspect an element of truth in at least some of them, amounting to criticism of the mayor's behaviour.[981] The Richard/Mum poet, May and Norton were all burgesses, as were, presumably, most of those Bristolians with sufficient means to pursue their legal cases in Chancery, and further opposition from within this elite is suggested by an ordinance of 1422, which sanctioned fines for any burgess vilifying the mayor, common councillors or their officials.[982] The ordinance was presumably occasioned by serious criticism coming from within the burgess minority, at a time when there was little factional or dynastic conflict within the realm, so any such criticism is likely to have been generated by rancour at the governing body's behaviour, rather than from 'imported' disputes. The fines were to be incurred when it was proved that the defamation had been made, presumably to the satisfaction of the mayor and common council, irrespective of what truth may have lain behind them: that such criticism may have been justified appears not to have been countenanced.

Given all this, it would be remarkable if criticism of the governing inner circle did not also come from below the burgess elite, but apart from the cases of heretics the evidence for this has not been found.[983] There is simply insufficient evidence to do anything more than speculate about the extent and grounds of any opposition to the mayor and his colleagues from beyond the burgess elite. This is because it was this same elite that controlled record-keeping in the town. Only they had the ability to create the

---

[980] See Appendix III.

[981] Southampton also witnessed accusations of factional corruption, partiality in the exercise of law, and an element of ethnic tension (although in this case involving Italians rather than Irish), and was likewise ruled by a small, tightly exclusive oligarchy: Platt: *Medieval Southampton*, 175-7. Fifteenth-century Norwich acquired a reputation for disorder, and while this should not necessarily be assumed to signify serious social dislocation, there were undoubtedly serious tensions within the ruling elite, as well as serious efforts to contain them: Philippa Maddern, "Order and Disorder', in Medieval Norwich, ed. Rawcliffe and Wilson, 189-212; Frost, "Urban Elite", 237-8, 243-5; Ben R. McCree, "Peacemaking and its Limits in Late Medieval Norwich", *EHR*, 109 (1994), 831-66. How successful any such efforts were in Bristol is unclear.

[982] *LRBB*, vol. 1, 149-53. The fines were to be imposed on a sliding scale, from 40s. to 6s. 8d., depending on who the accusation was aimed at (a mayor, sheriff, or bailiff, past or present, or a common councillor) and whether it related to actions taken in connection with the office held or in the individual's private capacity.

[983] The existence of a threatening 'underclass' was widely assumed in later medieval London, and influenced public policy and policing: Rexroth, *Deviance and Power*, passim.

written evidence by which we are able to construct a model of their world. They controlled their present, and by so doing largely controlled the image of that present available to future generations. There is no evidence that Bristol experienced large-scale strife between socio-economic groups of the kind exemplified by the oppositional movement led by Ralph Holland in London, but it would be unwise to argue from this silence that Bristol was an essentially harmonious place.[984] We must not accept uncritically versions of the present and past perpetrated by an elite in whose interest it was to portray themselves as natural leaders, exercising benign, disinterested and wise rule over a largely compliant and satisfied populace. That most of our evidence for tension between rulers and ruled comes from within the ecclesiastical and burgess elite can surely be explained by the simple fact that they had a virtual monopoly of writing, rather than by imagining that those beneath them were content with their lot and confident in the wisdom of those who exercised power over them. Such a tight grip on the means of written communication was far more effective than any Orwellian bureaucratic Leviathan in ensuring that it is through the eyes of the elites, not the majority, that we see their world.

So, any attempt to provide a definitive answer to the question set at the beginning of this chapter must be doomed to failure. Given the nature of the evidence, it is impossible to know what the majority of Bristolians thought of the political system within which they lived. We know that there were challenges to the mayor, on occasion. Sometimes these were motivated by factional, political rivalries, and it is likely that at times the character of individual mayors was called into question. There was at least implicit opposition on religious grounds from those designated by the authorities as Lollards. However, there is nothing to suggest that the system itself, oligarchy in its ethically neutral sense, was questioned. Of the mayor's two bodies, the transitory mortal office-holder may have appeared all too fallible at times, but this does not mean that the legitimacy of the office itself was questioned. That said, it is at least possible that Bristol's system of government was regarded as oligarchic in the pejorative sense by an unknowable number whose opinions were never allowed to enter the historical record.[985]

---

[984] Caroline M. Barron, "Ralph Holland and the London Radicals, 1438-1444", in *A History of the North London Branch of the Historical Association, together with Essays in Honour of its Golden Jubilee* (London, 1970), reprinted in *The Medieval Town*, ed. Holt and Rosser, 160-83; Rexroth, Deviance and Power, 126-56. See also S. H. Rigby and Elizabeth Ewan, "Government, Power and Authority 1300-1540", CUHB, 291-312, at 306-9, and for Welsh examples of urban social conflict and the growth of oligarchy, Spencer Dimmock, "Social Conflict in Welsh Towns, c.1280-1530", in *Urban Culture in Medieval Wales*, ed. Helen Fulton (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2012), 117-35, at 127-31.

[985] Useful context for this consideration of the relationships and attitudes of governors and governed in 15th-century Bristol is provided by the discussion of these issues on a national (and Scottish) scale by Rigby & Ewan, "Government, Power and Authority", 304-6, 309-12. Even when they survive, statements from those beyond the elites that appear to be supportive of, or acquiescing in, the hegemonic ideologies of their socio-economic superiors may in fact have been the products of conscious survival strategies that set out to deceive their masters: Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, passim.

Conclusion

The Childe of Bristowe, possibly composed in the town in the early to mid-fifteenth century, elevates the moral position of the merchant to a level above that not just of the lawyer, perhaps not a difficult task, but also of the cleric and landed gentleman. In this, it probably reflected how many contemporary Bristol merchants saw themselves. The wealthiest of these had, variously, married into noble families, been on friendly terms with kings, supported the Crown with their counsel and resources of money and ships, and represented their town in parliament not as burgesses but as knights of the shire. Their opinions and loyalties were valued by kings and magnates, and on occasion they were arbiters in the century's sometimes violent factional politics. Arguably, they had more than once determined the course of the nation's history. Bristol mariners were at the forefront of English exploration and the town's merchants provided some of the resources of money and material that made these voyages possible. At the same time, these same voyages of exploration, together with other Bristol expeditions mounted in the hunt for new markets, had attracted the interest and support of kings, magnates, and financiers from London and Italy. In other words, the elite of Bristol merchants were true merchant princes, able to rub shoulders with the greatest in the land.

William Worcestre considered his birthplace of sufficient interest to describe it in unprecedented detail. He saw it as a noble town, with impressive natural features, such as the Avon Gorge, and possessed of an ancient and mysterious history and notable inhabitants. He also commented approvingly on its architecture and civic facilities: towers and mansions, and conduit houses and other features provided for the public good by corporate or individual philanthropy. All of these, he thought, redounded to the credit of this prosperous and well-regulated town. His views were doubtless shared by other elite Bristolians,

Fifteenth-century Bristolians were used to seeing their town as a regional metropolis, as London's little sister rather than a superannuated market town. Theirs was England's earliest provincial urban county and, arguably, its earliest closed corporation, setting the pattern for the generality of English cities from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, ruled by a small, self-selecting oligarchy whose position was directly guaranteed by the Crown, which was usually content to entrust the oligarchs with the running of their own affairs. The charters of 1373 and 1499 expressed the Crown's confidence in the ability and willingness of Bristol's elite to self-govern at the king's command. While we might interpret, and possibly even regret, these charters as manifesting and reinforcing anti-democratic, oligarchic tendencies, those very same aspects would have been lauded by the governing elite as demonstrations of the trust invested in them by the Crown. The Crown's calculated gamble, if such it was, paid off in Bristol's case because the governing elite's tight grasp of power produced a certain level of stability, and their ultimate dependence on Crown backing ensured that they shared basic political interests: the symbiotic relationship between Crown and town governors meant that the former could normally rely on the latter's loyalty, while later medieval Bristol's two major charters gave the mayor and common council the means to enforce their rule on the Crown's behalf.

The granting of the 1499 charter is all the more striking in the light of events less than thirty years previously. Given Bristol's strategically important position it is perhaps inevitable that it should occasionally have become an actor in the dramas of high politics played out in the century after 1399. Sure-footed until the Readeption and the grievous error it committed in 1471, Bristol spent the rest of the century being

conspicuously loyal, and the 1499 charter put the final seal on its recovery of royal confidence.

And yet, for all its pride and grandeur, this was not medieval Bristol at its prime. That had already been passed by the opening of our period. Until 1453 Bristol's economic performance depended greatly on English military fortunes in France. Following the loss of Gascony Bristol became particularly vulnerable to broader economic, diplomatic and political trends, such as the national economic depression of the mid-century, the Wars of the Roses, and shifts in diplomatic policy towards potential allies and enemies. Indeed, the leading role played by Bristol in searching out new commercial opportunities was largely a reaction to the loss or restriction of traditional markets. In addition, events in Ireland and Wales played their part in influencing Bristol's prosperity and character throughout the century. Bristol's relationship with South-East Wales was particularly close, to the extent that we are probably justified in regarding this as part of the region to which Bristol was the metropolis.

Having recovered from the mid-century malaise Bristol approached the sixteenth century with its overseas trade looking buoyant, but this was not to last. The fifteenth century was not the highpoint of the town's medieval "golden age", but its swan song. Not until the later seventeenth century would Bristol be a regional metropolis with a significant degree of independence from London's economic, social, political and cultural influence. While fifteenth-century Bristolians, particularly the wealthier, more mobile members of the elite who enjoyed the broadest horizons, were fully aware of the capital's dominance within the realm, and traded with its merchants, inter-married with its citizens, sought London apprenticeships for some of their children, and looked towards it for models of civic governance, their town was still able to resist London's gravitational pull: the following century would see it join other English coastal towns in becoming an outport of the great mother city. Only from the sixteenth century would London be the essential arena in which the ambitious Bristolian sought his fortune. For now, however, Bristol's merchant princes could treat their metropolitan counterparts as, broadly, their equals.

The governing elite's room for manoeuvre *vis á vis* local magnates was also enhanced as a result of their political and economic power. Despite the proximity and long-standing influence of the Berkeleys, fourteenth-century Bristol was occasionally able to pursue policies that were hostile to them, and the creation of the county of Bristol probably diminished the family's influence within Bristol and its immediate environs. While Berkeley influence may well be suspected in the events of 1399 and 1400, some Bristolians' violent reactions against Henry IV's administration suggest that it was possible for burgesses to take an independent course of action, antagonistic to the perceived interests of both the mayor and Lord Berkeley, even at the height of the latter's power. After 1417 Bristolians had to contend with the inheritors of Berkeley local influence, and this would deeply embroil them in the politics of the Wars of the Roses, but even in the period from 1450 to 1471 no one faction enjoyed uncontested dominance of Bristol's political life. The civic elite were sometimes riven by violent differences of opinion: they were not simply reacting to external stimuli like Pavlov's dogs, but were taking considered decisions, based, in part, on calculations of what would be to their commercial and political advantage.

The political power of Bristol's civic rulers also gave them a high degree of independence from the Church, a situation encouraged by their town's position between the two dioceses of Worcester and Bath and Wells. Whatever anticlerical and doctrinal criticisms may have been harboured by a minority of craftsmen and labourers,

Bristol's property-owning elites were conspicuously enthusiastic and conventional in their piety, at least in the last three-quarters of the century: the evidence of the *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger* poet, and of Bristolians' involvement in Oldcastle's Rebellion, among other indications, suggest that sympathy for some Lollard positions could be found among the broad elite before the 1420s. While distance from episcopal oversight did not translate into lack of religious enthusiasm, the absence of a great monastic scriptorium or the bureaucracy of a dean and chapter probably did encourage the development of a more than usually secular and vernacular urban culture.

Bristol's governors were attempting to assert their authority over a population that was, compared to their rural counterparts, better educated, better informed, and less constrained (at least through the traditional structures of "feudal", manorial authority), and they had to do so using a relatively puny system of law enforcement. While the mayor and sheriffs presided over an expanding system of borough and county courts, and the mayor, along with his fellow justices, had the right to inflict corporal and capital punishments, the personnel of enforcement at their command was limited to just a handful of sergeants. For all their claims to being the king's immediate lieutenants, and their very real judicial power, the physical ability of mayor and common councillors to enforce their will on their fellow Bristolians was strictly limited. Unlike the gentry and nobility in the countryside, in their efforts to rule urban governors lacked household men, retainers or retinues, and nor could they rely on habits of deference built up through generations of obedience to their dynasties, while their power as landlords to threaten obdurate tenants was also highly constrained. In addition, the power exercised by the mayor by virtue of his office (and this was, to reiterate, very real), lasted for just one year at a time: at the end of his term he would resume his place as one of the governed, albeit at a level of great privilege and favour. In short, the maintenance of authority within a town like Bristol probably depended on the consent of the governed to a greater extent than would usually be found in rural communities. That consent could not simply be assumed, but nor could it simply be enforced. Rather, Bristol held together because of a culture of obedience. The broader elite of male, adult burgesses realised that it was in their interests, in general, to obey their superiors, but in turn the maintenance of their hegemony depended upon a general acceptance of their authority by those below them in the pecking order, their wives, children, servants, apprentices and employees. Below these subordinates, at the lowest rungs of the ladder among Bristol's sizeable population of those not only without property but also without any realistic expectation of ever enjoying any, those denied a stake in this society, the means by which the elite's order was kept and authority enforced remain obscure, but these people were clearly not in a constant state of revolutionary ferment. In this book my study of the power structures of fifteenth-century Bristol is, some might say, cut off at the knees: I have had neither the time, space, nor, perhaps, power (given the less tractable nature of the evidence available from which to probe beyond the public lives of the adult male burgess elite) to pursue it into the households of the propertied or the hovels of the poor. Many important questions relating to gender and life-cycle, for example, have had to be put to one side.

Fifteenth-century Bristol's governing elite needed means other than just physical constraint to maintain their dominance. One important weapon in their arsenal was a sophisticated corpus of textual, visual and performative cultural products. Of these, the most pervasive and powerful was probably public or semi-public ceremony, from mayor-making to processions. With few exceptions these performances could be

witnessed by the entire population, and neither illiteracy nor ignorance of particular frames of cultural reference would have been a bar to their comprehension. The message was usually simple (occasionally brutally so), clear and direct. The other media, exemplified in the words and pictures of *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar,* were usually intended for an elite. The frequency with which these exclusive products also stressed the importance of obedience and deference to authority supports the impression that these qualities could not be taken for granted even among the burgess class: following Steven Lukes, we can infer from the regularity with which they were insisted upon that it was not thought that their adoption was so self-evidently sensible that no idealogical pressure had to be exerted in order to maintain them.

As important contributions towards this culture of civic legitimacy Robert Ricart was able to insist on the venerable origins of the office of Bristol's mayoralty and on the even more ancient origins of the town itself. The Brennius story served a number of purposes: besides adding the sheen of ancient precedent to the town and its governing institutions, it also connected its history to that of both Greece and Rome and to London, or New Troy, thereby providing a neat mythological expression of Bristol's admittedly subaltern, but still proud, relationship with the metropolis. In the circumstances of the 1470s and '80s, Geoffrey of Monmouth's tale of political reconciliation at home followed by military triumph abroad suited the political circumstances in which Bristol found itself. Finally, it legitimated, if such legitimation were needed, the position of the large, and probably increasing, number of Bristol-Welsh.

Beyond the burgess elite it is difficult to know how Bristolians saw themselves, their town, their place in the socio-economic hierarchy, or the wider world. The way in which people experienced the world around them depended on their occupation and status: while some Bristol sailors explored beyond the furthest borders of the known world, others sailed to the edges of Europe, while many more relatively humble carriers and the crewmen of ships, boats and trows would have travelled considerable distances within Britain and Ireland. However, in general it is likely that geographical knowledge and conceptual horizons expanded and contracted as one moved up and down the socio-economic hierarchy.

Disparities within this hierarchy would also have determined access to the past. The elites had the means to preserve their family memories more effectively than those below them. They also had access to a corporate history based on texts which could be employed for rhetorical and strategic ends. However, not even the urban laity enjoyed the institutional and dynastic resources of the Church or of the Berkeley dynasty. Such resources allowed them to preserve their history, traditions, and memory.

The Bristol elites' commitment to preserving versions of their past provides another indication of how highly they valued their town: these histories tended to be highly selective, stressing the town's loyalty to the Crown, perhaps one might even say, its "respectability". In addition, in this pre-Reformation culture of memory the remembrance of the deceased was as important in Bristol as anywhere else, but the greater concentration of the living found here, in one of the largest towns in England, produced an equally high proliferation and intensity of memories of the dead. The environment of fifteenth-century Bristol would have provided constant reminders both of the dead and of the inescapable duties of the living towards them, conveyed through a range of visual and aural media. The past, whether civic or personal, was a vital component in the constitution of fifteenth-century Bristol's present.

Appendix I: The Early Course of the Frome and the Reliability of the Bristol Annals

The final stretch of the Frome, from just below the Frome Bridge to the river's confluence with the Avon, runs through an artificial channel, the Trench, excavated in the 1240s. There is no doubt of this: we have originals or early copies of the documents that record the grant of part of the marshland held by St Augustine's Abbey to the town of Bristol, through which the Trench would be cut, and the orders of Henry III to the men of Redcliffe to co-operate with their neighbours to the north of the Avon in this venture.[986] However, controversy has arisen over the course of the Frome before its diversion in the 1240s. This is an explicit challenge to traditional ideas that go back at least as far as the fifteenth century; Bristol's seventeenth and eighteenth-century annals are also part of that tradition, and were these objections to established opinion on the subject of the Frome's earlier course to be proved correct, the veracity of these annals, as preserving a medieval historiographical tradition, would necessarily be called into question.

Traditionally, the earlier course of the Frome is said to have run from Frome Bridge to the Avon at Welsh Back, describing a gentle curve around the base of the western town wall, in the vicinity of present-day Baldwin Street.[987] The description of Bristol contained in the mid-twelfth-century *Gesta Stephani* describes the town as tightly enclosed on three sides by the Frome and Avon, so that it appeared to soar straight out of the water on its rocky promontory.[988] While far from conclusive, this description would seem to suggest that before its diversion the Frome ran as the tradition asserts, somewhere near the present line of Baldwin Street, close by the town wall.

However, for an unequivocal assertion of the Frome's earlier course we have to turn to the post-medieval annals. The following is taken from the Haythorne Annals:

> 1246: Unto this time there was noe bridge over the Avon, but a ferry. Shipping also lay at the place now called the Shambles, where the port was; & therefore the church of our lady ye assumption was called the St Mary le Port. The river Frome ran along neere the place, where Baldwin street now standeth: but now a Trench was cut, & the Marsh of Bristoll separated from Channons Marsh, which for the citys benefit was granted by William Bradstone, then Abbot of St Aug[ust]ins: there running through Channons Marsh but a small streame before, for which a rent was paid to the Abbot & co[n]vent by the Maior & Com[m]ons.[989]

Another annal records:

> And then the trench was digged for bringing the river into the Quay. For at that time the fresh river from behind the castle mills did run down under Froom-gate bridge, & so thro' Baldwin Street & it drove a mill called Baldwin's Cross Mills. And when the trench to the quay was finished, the water was stopped at the point against the Red-Clift, & all the while the foundations of the arches were laying & the masons were building, the water did run under the bridges of Redcliff & Temple gates, being made for that purpose: & at Tower

[986] *Bristol Charters, 1155-1373*, 18-19; *GRBB*, *Text, part. I*, 89-90.
[987] This version, and its evidential basis, is conveniently summarised in J. W. Sherborne, *The Port of Bristol in the Middle Ages* (BBHA, 3rd edn, 1987), 4-7.
[988] *Gesta Stephani, regis Anglorum, et ducis Normannorum,* ed. Richard Clarke Sewell (London: English History Society, 1846), 36-7.
[989] BCL, 10164 (Samuel Seyer, Bristol Annals).

> Harris the water was bayed, that it could not come down to hinder the building, but kept its current way. And so the bridge being built the bays were broken down.[990]

These accounts are related to, but not identical with, those of Ricart:

> 1240: This yere was the Trench y made & y caste of the river, fro the Gybbe Taillour unto the Key by the maanobre of all the comminaltee as wele of Redcliffe warde, as of the Towne of Bristowe. And the same tyme thenhabitaunts of Redecliff were combyned & corporatid with the towne of Bristowe. And as for the grounde of seynt Austyn's side of the forseid ryver, hit was yeve & grauntid to the cominaltee of the seid towne by sir William a Bradstone, then Abbot of Seynt Austyns, for certeyn money therfore to hym paide by the seide Comminaltee, as appereth by olde writyng therof made betwene the forseid maire & Comminaltee & the seid abbot & Co[n]vent.[991]

And of Leland, who repeats Ricart's account almost verbatim, and adds, in two other places in his section on Bristol:

> The ryver of Frome ran sumetyme from the were by the castle, where now is a stone bridge doune by the este syde of it;…The shipps of olde tyme cam only up by Avon to a place caullyd the Bak, where was and is depthe enowghe of watar; but the botom is very stony and rughe sens by polecye they trenched somwhat a-lofe by northe west of the old key on Avon *anno* 1247. and in continuance bringynge the cowrse of From ryver that way hathe made softe and whosy harborow for grete shipps.[992]

Neither the accounts of Ricart nor Leland present any problems, and what they say can be verified from other sources. The 'olde writyng' alluded to by Ricart and other annalists is the charters between the mayor and commonalty and the abbot which were copied into the *Great Red Book of Bristol*, and so would have been readily accessible. Indeed, they could have provided most of the information in these accounts. Neither throws any light on the former course of the Frome.

The later annals supply further detail not mentioned by Ricart or Leland. This could have arrived in three ways: derived from another, independent written source; derived from oral tradition, or simply concocted at some point. Certainly, some aspects of their testimony can be called into question. The claim that the Portwall ditch, spanned by bridges leading to the Redcliff and Temple Gates, was built for the purpose of diverting the Avon is at odds with the documentary evidence, which suggests that the Portwall, and so presumably also its ditch, was in existence by the mid-1130s. According to the annals the ditch was used to channel the waters of the Avon after it had been dammed to allow for the building of the new Bristol Bridge in 1247. On the basis of his excavation of a section of this ditch in 1965 Max Hebditch found that it was over fifty feet wide and at least fourteen feet deep, but he thought it unlikely that it could have carried the whole volume of water from the Avon. Nevertheless, he did not discount the possibility that it could have sufficed to reduce the flow sufficiently at low tide to allow work on the bridge to be carried out.[993]

---

[990] BCL, 9075 (Martin Annal)

[991] Ricart, *Kalendar*, 28.

[992] Leland, *Itinerary*, X, 87, 90-1, 93. See also John Latimer, "Leland in Gloucestershire", *TBGAS*, 14 (1889-90), 221-84.

[993] Max Hebditch, "Excavations on the Medieval Defences, Portwall Lane, Bristol, 1965", TBGAS, 87 (1968), 131-43. See also P. A Rahtz, "Excavation by the Town Wall, Baldwin Street, Bristol, 1957" *TBGAS*, 79 (1960), 221-50, at 222; K. J. Barton, "Excavations at Back Hall, Bristol, 1958", *TBGAS*, 79 (1960), 251-86, at 251; R. Price and M. Ponsford, "Excavation at the Town Wall, Bristol, 1974", *Rescue Archaeology in the Bristol Area: I* (City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, 1979), 15-27, at 20-23; R. Price, "An Excavation at Bristol Bridge, Bristol, 1975", in ibid., 29-33. The detailed description of the works undertaken to divert

The most important claims relate to the earlier course of the Frome. There is agreement in all the annals that the river originally ran from Frome Bridge southwards, running alongside, or through, Baldwin Street, to join the Avon near Bristol Bridge. There is the additional claim that the river drove a water mill called Baldwin's Cross Mills. This assertion has been generally accepted. Certainly, the course of that part of the Frome above the Frome Bridge (now culvetted over) curves around the north of the intra-mural town, at the base of the sandstone promontory on which it sits, and if the river had continued this course below the Frome Bridge it would have followed the line of the town wall at least as far as Fisher Lane (now obliterated by the building of Clare Street), if not Baldwin Street.

However, this interpretation has not gone unquestioned. In particular, Roger Leech has argued that the Frome originally ran further to the west, roughly along the line of the thirteenth-century wall built between the new course of the Frome and the Avon, now marked by the seventeenth-century King Street, enclosing that part of the Marsh that had been reclaimed. He made this suggestion mainly on the basis of three observations: that there was a settlement in the Marsh before the 1240s, and that it is unlikely that this would have developed on the other side of the Frome, since this cut it off from intra-mural Bristol; that no reference to the Frome following this course can be found in contemporary documents; and that it was inherently unlikely that the exposed river bed could have been filled and built upon, to form Baldwin Street, within about a decade of the engineering works. Instead, he suggests that the old channel of the Frome formed a ditch outside the new wall to be built in the Marsh, and that the wall consequently followed the course of this channel.[994] If Leech is correct, then the testimony of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century annals must obviously fall under deep suspicion.

On the other hand, Leech's interpretation is not without its own problems. His doubt that Baldwin Street had been built over the old course of the Frome is very well founded. In his *Topography of Medieval and Early Modern Bristol* the earliest identified Baldwin Street properties, located roughly halfway along the street, can be dated no more precisely than to the period 1240 to 1255 or 1286 (nos. 19 & 22), but two deeds in the cartulary of St Mark's Hospital referring to property on the street can be no later than 1242, while about ten years earlier a rent was granted from a curtilage in 'Baluenstret', proving that Baldwin Street predated the diversion of the Frome; unfortunately, the exact location of these properties cannot be determined.[995] This does not undermine the case for the annals' reliability, however, since they are not unanimous in claiming that the Frome once occupied exactly the same route as that later taken by Baldwin Street. The Haythorne Annal asserts only that the Frome ran nearby.

---

the river may have been inspired by similar engineering works, or at least the discussion of plans for such endeavours, in the eighteenth century: A. F. Williams, "Bristol Port Plans and Improvement Schemes', *TBGAS*, 81 (1962), 138-88; that the works undertaken in the 1240s would have necessitated dams and other works of this sort means that the Annals' picture is both eminently possible and also possibly the product of logical deduction on the annalist's part.

994 R. Leech, "The Medieval Defences of Bristol" in *"Almost the Richest City": Bristol in the Middle Ages*, ed. L. Keen (British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions, XIX, 1997), 18-30, at 26-8. Leech's suggestion has been followed by Reg Jackson, "Archaeological Work at 22-25 Queen Square and 42-44 Welsh Back, Bristol, 2002-2006", *Bristol and Avon Archaeology*, 23 (2008-9), 3-12, at 4.

995 Leech, *Topography*, 23-4; *The Cartulary of St Mark's Hospital, Bristol*, ed. C. D. Ross, BRS, 21 (1959), 92-3; BRO 5139/185; A. H. Smith, *Place Names of Gloucestershire*, *Part III: The Lower Severn Valley, the Forest of Dean*, English Place-Name Society, 40 (1964), 86.

Powerful support for the traditional interpretation of the earlier course of the Frome is given by the testimony of William Worcestre. Not only does Worcestre state unequivocally that the Frome once flowed along the line of Baldwin Street, '...in which street the river Frome flowed in ancient times, on the south side...', but his description of Pylle End gives persuasive evidence for this assertion.[996] This street ran from Baldwin Street just north of St Leonard's Gate to the edge of St Stephen's churchyard. This is Worcestre's account of it:

> Also, at the street called the Pylle End, between St Leonard's Gate and the entrance of St Stephen's churchyard, houses were built; and because the foundation was so weak at bottom, they dug 47 feet downwards in the ground for a firm foundation. And there they found at the bottom of the foundation[-trench] a skiff with a gown of raycloth, and they also found a great tree, 16 feet in length, squared, not rotten but entirely sound, etc., and they left [it] in the depths.[997]

The boat was perhaps used as part of the fill when the channel was drained and covered over. The water-logged condition of the soil was doubtless responsible for the organic material's preservation, and for the need to dig such deep foundations. According to Barrett another (or perhaps even the same!) boat 'and naval stores' were 'of late years found in digging the foundation for a house in Baldwin-street'.[998] This observation might be further supported by the results of an excavation carried out at a property fronting the south side of Baldwin Street, near the Rackhay, by Michael Ponsford. This uncovered a square-ended revetment wall above a water-logged deposit, together with some preserved timbers. This was probably the remains of a small private dock, about the width of a tenement. As such, it would be evidence both for development south of Baldwin Street before the diversion of the Frome, and for the old course of the river running behind these buildings.[999]

The street name, Pylle End, where Worcestre says the skiff was found, may also be significant. Apart from Worcestre's account, all of the six pre-1550 spellings of this name found by Coates and Scherr in their analysis of Bristol street names contain single 'l', which suggest that it derives from Old English *pil*, 'pile or stake' (and this led A. H. Smith to assume that this was the street name's derivation), but on the strength of Worcestre's description Coates and Scherr, on balance, prefer a derivation from 'pill', still the local term for an inlet or creek. In addition, they suggest that *Scadepullestrete*, the earlier medieval name for the northern section of Marsh Street that connects with Pylle End, refers to the street's termination in a pool or pill. Street names and Worcestre's account indicate that Pylle End replaced an inlet from the Frome, in its earlier course, and hence that the river once ran close to Baldwin Street. A small dock adjoining the Frome near St Stephen's Church might be the origin of the *portus Frome* used as a reference point in the charter of 1240 by which the abbot of St Augustine's granted the land on which the new course of the Frome was cut.[1000] Further, the presence of a creek and anchorage next to the site of St Stephen's could explain Leland's

---

[996] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 358.
[997] Worcestre, *Topography*, no. 420.
[998] Barrett, *History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol*, 52; Seyer, *Memoirs,* vol. II, 23.
[999] M. W. Ponsford, "Rackhay", *Bulletin of the Bristol Archaeological Research Group*, 5(1) (1974), 9-10.; Pers. Comm.. Michael Ponsford, to whom I am most grateful for help on this point.
[1000] *The Cartulary of St Augustine's Abbey,* ed. David Walker (BGAS, 10, 1998), 376-7; the other copy is in *GRBB, Text, Part. I*, 89-90.

remark that, 'Sum say that shipps of very auncient tyme cam up to S. Stephanes Churche in Brightstow.'[1001]

The annals also state that Baldwin Street took its name from the Baldwin Cross mill that stood by the old course of the Frome. Seyer asserts the following:

> Nearly opposite to Blind-steps, which are the steps leading down from the market into Baldwin's street, was a mill ... The mill-house was standing within memory at the corner between Baldwin-street and Back-street, projecting into the street beyond the present corner house. The writer of this account saw about A' D' 1785 in the cellar of that house the thoroughs of the mill, which were two large perforations side by side in a thick stone, through which the water rushed upon the wheel: it was called *Baldwin's-cross-mill*, having that name from Baldwin's-cross, which stood adjoining in the street.[1002]

Now, it is impossible to know if Baldwin Mill gave its name to Baldwin Street, or *vice versa*, but unless Seyer's eye-witness testimony is to be rejected – and he was a careful and scrupulous historian – then there would seem to be clear proof of a water mill on the site of the presumed old course of the Frome, a site landlocked by Seyer's time.[1003]

The topography of this part of Bristol, which Professor Leech has done so much to elucidate, may hold clues to the Frome's earlier course. If the river's line from the Frome Bridge is continued it reaches the space marked on Leech's plan as the Fish Market.[1004] This leads to Fisher Lane, which south of St Leonard's Gate turns into Baldwin Street. The large area of open space occupied by the Fish Market is of a similar width to the Frome just south of the bridge, and beyond that, adjoining Fisher Lane, is what appears to be an *insula*, an island of buildings filling in what was an extension of the open area occupied by the Fish Market and that, in all probability, once extended all the way to St Leonard's Gate.[1005] None of the Fisher Lane properties identified in Leech's *Topography* pre-date the fourteenth century. This lane and the *insula* adjoining its south side could very well have accommodated the section of the Frome from the start of the later Trench below Frome Bridge to St Leonard's Gate. After this the picture presented by the topography is less clear, but the southern boundaries of a number of the tenements on the south side of Baldwin Street look like they might have followed the river bank, and the kink in Back Street south of its junction with Baldwin Street may also have originally been a response to a bridge over the river at this point, suggesting that once past the site of St Leonard's Gate the river curved south of the street.[1006] From its beginnings at the site of St Leonard's Gate Baldwin Street takes a sharp turn to the east; extending the line of Fisher Lane in a smooth curve takes that line south of Baldwin Street to Rackhay and connects it with the Avon around the modern-day Crow Lane. This is precisely where Ponsford observed what he suggested may have been part of a dock, so the old line of the Frome may have ran some metres south of Baldwin Street, leaving room both for the tenements to its south, and for the water mill between the street and the river.

As Seyer was first to note, a course for the lower Frome that curved around the south-western end of the promontory on which Saxon Bristol was built is highly unlikely to have been natural. Rather, it was probably channelled to form a moat below the town. This may have been done when the walls were constructed, which was

---

[1001] *Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. Smith, Part x, 91.
[1002] Seyer, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 24.
[1003] Baldwin's Cross certainly survived into the 18th century: Leech, *Topography,* 20.
[1004] Leech, *Topography*, xx, Map 2; idem, "Medieval Defences of Bristol", Fig. 2, p. 21.
[1005] Nos. 4S-13S on Leech's map.
[1006] From west to east, nos. 3S, 4S, 21, 12-8, 5-1, A on Leech's Maps 2, 9-10.

probably some time after Bristol's parishes were laid out.[1007] The Normans are the most likely candidates for the construction of this 'moat', since it would have enhanced the defensive capability of their newly-walled western extension of the town, to be discussed below.

The Haythorne Annal's reference to a small stream that ran across the Marsh before the Frome's diversion might even refer to a remnant of this original course; further, it is possible that this stream was used as the basis for the Trench of the 1240s. Equally, it is possible that the Frome originally drained into the Avon through a delta of rivulets spreading out across the flat marshland between the ridge on which Bristol was founded and the river cliffs rising to the north. The putative first channelling of the Frome drainage system would have allowed for reclamation to take place in the Marsh, from the river's new course southwards to the future Marsh Wall. This would in turn have made possible the settlement in the Marsh recorded by the mid-twelfth century.[1008] The law-ditches, running down to the Marsh Wall ditch, were part of the drainage system, mirroring the system of ditches found across the Avon in Redcliffe and Temple: these ran south from the Avon to the Portwall ditch.[1009] In addition, perhaps both of the ditches running immediately outside the thirteenth-century Marsh Wall and Portwall, the former suggested by Leech as marking the original course of the Frome, predated the walls, and were originally built as part of a wider drainage system.

Leech maintains that a course for the Frome along the Baldwin Street line would have separated the suburb in the Marsh from Bristol proper. However, this would hardly have been a serious barrier to communication. A wooden bridge, perhaps at the Back Street-Baldwin Street junction, or a ferry would have been no great undertaking, and could easily have escaped notice in the fragmentary extant documentation of the area before the mid-thirteenth century.

However, if the Frome had followed this course, to meet the Avon at the Rackhay/Crow lane, it would have left a mere 150 metres of quayside between it and Bristol Bridge. The later annals suggest a solution, namely, that the quayside extended as far west as the Shambles. Worcestre's notes on the Shambles support the assertion made in the Haythorne Annals:

> SHAMBLES
>
> The extremely high and spacious halls of the king, with vaults, in the street of Worship Street, otherwise the Shambles or Butchery. In the street called The Shambles there are 3 extremely deep cellars of the King, beneath three halls of great size and built high, which were established for the safekeeping of wool and merchandise, for loading Bristol ships [bound] for foreign parts beyond the seas... The street of The Shambles, anciently called Worship Street, where the harbour for shipping and the market for wool used to be... [The Shambles] from ancient times called Worship Street because it was a street of distinction (*vicus honoris*) on account of woollen goods arriving, and the lading of ships at the harbour.[1010]

Worcestre's suggested derivation is clearly unconvincing. Coates and Scherr suggest that the second element of 'Worship' may have derived from 'slip' or 'slimy', either of which would accord with a situation where the street originally gave access to the river.

[1007] C. S. Taylor, "The Parochial Boundaries of Bristol", *TBGAS*, 33 (1910), 126-39, at 132.
[1008] Leech, "Medieval Defences", 27.
[1009] For the Marsh law-ditches, see Leech, *Topography*, 6-7, 25.
[1010] Worcestre, *Topography*, nos 27, 79, 298. Barrett repeated the claim that wool was handled at the Shambles: *History and Antiquities,* 97, followed by Rich in his edition of *Staple Court Books,* 68.

[1011]Unfortunately, the first element does not seem to be traceable to 'wool', rather, it may relate to an enclosure of some kind, but Worcestre's references to a wool market and quay are unequivocal. This correlates with the Annals' assertion that St Mary-le-Port took its name from the market that lay between it and the quayside.

There are still problems however, among them the reference to a royal wool warehouse. Royal taxes on wool exports were levied in 1202 and 1204, but these were short-lived, and a regular customs administration was not established until 1275.[1012] This was about thirty years after the new Frome channel was dug, by which time, in any case, Bristol was no longer a major wool exporter, so there would be no reason for such impressive accommodation for customed wool to be built on this site: it is highly unlikely that these warehouses would have been built in connection with the brief experiments in taxing wool in 1202 and 1204. Possibly, the cellars were built for the storage of wool long before 1275, but only after this date was it assumed that their function was to store customed wool.

The hypothesis that before the 1240s Bristol's main quayside extended as far east as the Shambles also presents problems, this time relating to Bristol Bridge. A bridge at its present location would have prevented ships from proceeding any further up-river. The Haythorne Annal asserts that there was no bridge, but a ferry, before the 1240s, but Bristol of course takes its name from a bridge, so there must have been a bridge across the Avon long before the Conquest. Only in the nineteenth century was the now accepted derivation of Bristol as "settlement by the bridge" widely accepted, and so before then it might have seemed reasonable to suppose that no bridge existed before the 1240s. When the thirteenth-century bridge was being demolished in the eighteenth century wooden pillars were found encased in the stone piers, which, it has been assumed, were the remnants of a wooden bridge replaced in the 1240s.[1013]

However, if these pillars were not the remains of a bridge on the site of the present Bristol Bridge - and at this distance from the event it is impossible to be sure - then it becomes possible to argue for the existence of a pre-thirteenth century bridge further upstream. In fact, this location for an earlier bridge solves a number of problems. Most obviously, an original bridging point further east would have allowed ships to tie up at the Shambles. This quayside would have been made redundant by the excavation of the new course of the Frome, allowing the new bridge to be built further west. This would make the construction of a new bridge an essential part of the re-orientation of the thirteenth-century harbour facilities, rather than a desirable 'add-on'. A pre-twelfth century bridge might have crossed the Avon as a continuation of Temple Street, assuming that the narrow Wrington or Hawkins Lane running from Counterslip to the river preserves the original course of this street northwards, and on the other bank might have connected with the street that ran to the west of St Peter's Church, called by the eighteenth century Dolphin Street. There is a broad alignment between these two streets either side of the Avon. Such suggestions accord with the theory propounded by Neale, among others, that the original Saxon Bricgstow had its nucleus on the ridge later occupied by St Mary-le-Port and St Peter's churches, possibly continued eastwards into the area later covered by the Norman castle, and that the area west of St Mary-le-Port, the Broad Street-Corn Street-High Street axis, was a later, probably post-Conquest addition, perhaps in response to the destruction of the eastern

[1011] Coates and Scherr, "Some Local Place-Names in Medieval and Early-Modern Bristol", 166-7.
[1012] *Staple Court Books*, ed. Rich, 68-72; T. E. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (CUP, 1977), 9-12.
[1013] Seyer, *Memoirs,* vol. II, 27-9; Nicholls and Taylor, *Bristol Past and Present*, vol. I, 91, 124-5.

part of Saxon Bristol by the castle.[1014] If this is correct, then the bridge to which the toponym Bricgstow, "the place of assembly by the bridge", alludes, could not have been in its present position. Proponents of this theory usually assume that a new bridge was built at the southern end of High Street by the Normans, as part of the westward redevelopment, but the continued existence of a quayside by Worship Street until the thirteenth century would seem to discount this possibility, and necessitate the survival of a bridge on the line of Temple and Dolphin streets until the thirteenth century. This might also provide some support for the putative Avon ferry in approximately the same location as the post-thirteenth century Bristol Bridge: the town's centre of gravity having shifted westwards, there might have been demand for an alternative means of crossing the river at this point. The distance between the current Bristol Bridge and its supposed Saxon predecessor is only about 150 metres, but the most direct route to it from the north bank of the Avon at the western end of town would have necessitated walking along the busy quay side, while to avoid this congestion would have meant a diversion via Winch Street, and this might have been seen as enough of an inconvenience to make a ferry crossing the more attractive option. If an "eastern" bridge was only replaced in the 1240s, then the construction of the new Frome channel provided not only improved harbour facilities, but also the opportunity for the redesign of the town's street plan to reflect developments in the post-Conquest urban topography.

However, documentary and archaeological evidence relating to the south bank of the Avon would seem to pose difficulties for the proposition that the Bristol Bridge of the 1240s was the first bridge on this site.[1015] On the basis of this Professor Leech has suggested that in the area of Redclliffe a few tenement blocks either side of the 1240s Bristol Bridge, known by the later part of the thirteenth century as Arthur's Fee, developed in late Saxon times as a defended bridgehead. A law ditch ran roughly north-west to south-east to divide Arthur's Fee from the area that extended to the north-east river bank, and another ran to the south of the Fee, at least as far as Counterslip. The former may be late Saxon, while the latter may have been no earlier than the twelfth century. As Leech himself admits, "the jury is out" on this question, and while there is clear evidence of settlement in the north-western tip of the Redcliffe peninsula in the late Saxon period, it is less clear why that settlement could not have extended right across the southern river bank, allowing for a defended bridgehead anywhere along this line, including the area around Temple Street.

To conclude, there is no reason to doubt the annals' assertions that the Frome ran alongside Baldwin Street before its diversion. The collective picture they present of this and of related issues, such as the location of the pre-1240s quayside and bridge, is broadly congruent with both fifteenth and sixteenth-century views and with some recent opinion, although admittedly this is not unanimous. Undoubtedly, particular details of the annals' accounts of the works of the 1240s do invite scepticism. The overall picture they present, however, is sound, and suggests that they were ultimately based on at least one lost medieval chronicle.

[1014] Lorna Watts & Philip Rahtz, *Mary-le-Port, Bristol: Excavations, 1962/3* (City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, 1985), pp. 15-7, 185-6.
[1015] This paragraph is based on R. Leech, "Arthur's Acre: A Saxon Bridgehead at Bristol" *TBGAS*, 127 (2009), 11-20.

Appendix II: Bristol's Iberian Cultural Influences

Evidence of Bristol's Iberian cultural links can be seen in the early-Tudor Poyntz Chapel at St Mark's Hospital, now the Lord Mayor's Chapel, where sixteenth-century Spanish floor tiles were laid.[1016] As we have seen, William Canynges appears to have used a moor's head on his personal seal, if not also as a charge on his coat of arms, and at the feet of his effigy as Dean of Westbury is a reclining figure that Smith has interpreted as a Saracen, claiming that both this and the moor's head were influenced by similar motifs in Spain and Portugal, referring to the Christian triumph over the Islamic states.[1017]

St Mary Redcliffe introduces us to another possible Iberian connection. The outer north porch was built around 1320. While this is a striking structure, most of its elements have English precedents. The hexagonal plan seems to have been inspired by the Eleanor crosses, particularly Waltham and the original Charing Cross. Similarities have been detected between the band of niches above the portal and its equivalent on the gatehouse of St Augustine's Canterbury.[1018] Other features show similarities with buildings which are much more local. The North Porch's 'nodding' ogee arches, have close analogues in the Berkeley Chapel of Augustine's Abbey on the other side of Bristol, and the porch tracery shares design elements with that of the abbey's main east window. However, the richly-decorated polygonally-arched portal has no precedent in English architecture. In addition, among the most notable features common to both the abbey and St Mary's are the "stellate" tomb recesses in the abbey choir and in St Mary's nave. At their most developed these recesses are made up of a polygonal arch with four or more straight sides enclosing a cusped inner arch made up of a series of ogee-shaped foils, the whole framed by stellate concave curves with elaborate finials radiating from the angles. They are also found at Berkeley Castle and the neighbouring St Mary's church, and the tomb niches were all, it seems, intended for members of the Berkeley family. Their association with that family's architectural patronage has led to them being called "Berkeley arches". These tomb niches can be dated to the first half of the fourteenth century. These similarities have led to the assumption that the same architect, the 'Bristol Master', was responsible for major work in both churches, including the North Porch at St Mary's, as well as at Berkeley.[1019]

While possible English sources have been claimed for most of the individual features found in the North Porch, apart from the portal, the overall effect is reminiscent of non-Christian artistic traditions. This led John Harvey confidently to assert that:

[1016] Andrew Foyle, *Bristol: Pevsner Architectural Guides* (Yale UP, New Haven & London, 2004), 101.
[1017] Smith, *St Mary Redcliffe*, 97. Canynges traded with Iberia, but this was but one among many destinations in his varied portfolio: Williams, *Chantries of William Canynges*, 56; Sherborne, *William Canynges*, 8; *Overseas Trade,* ed. Carus Wilson, 137-9.
[1018] Linda Monckton, "Late Gothic Architecture in South West England: Four Major Centres of Building Activity at Wells, Bristol, Sherbourne and Bath" (University of Warwick Ph.D., 1999), vol. I, 107-8, n. 4; *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200-1400,* ed. Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski (Royal Academy of Arts/Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1987), 413.
[1019] C. Wilson, "Gothic Metamorphosed", in *Medieval Art, Architecture and History of Bristol Cathedral*, ed. J. Cannon and B. Williamson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 69-147, at 139-40; Smith, *St Mary Redcliffe*, 39-51, 56-8; *Bristol Cathedral: History and Architecture*, ed. J. Rogan (Stroud: Tempus, 2000), 92, 101-2; Foyle, *Bristol*, 54, 70; David Verey and Alan Brooks, *Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean. The Buildings of England* (3rd edn, New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2002), 172, 178.

> The unusual north doorway of the porch of St Mary Redcliffe at Bristol, paralleled in the West only by the related polygonal openings in BristolCathedral and at Berkeley Castle, and dating from not later than the first quarter of the fourteenth century, is the most notable instance in the whole of western Europe of the impact of Oriental ideas before the arrival of the Portuguese Manueline style (1495-1521) incorporating motives from the Indies.[1020]

Harvey suggested that such influences might have come more or less directly from Persia, via diplomatic embassies, or been introduced by such men as 'Lalys', supposedly a twelfth-century Palestinian architect brought to England by Richard de Granville and employed by Robert, earl of Gloucester in South Wales.[1021] However, a closer and more direct source would have been Iberia. By 1300 Muslim rule in the peninsula had been confined to Granada, but the amalgamation of Islamic and Christian architectural forms had resulted in a unique hybrid, the *Mudéjar,* popular in many parts of Castile and Aragón. Among its characteristics was the intensive use of polygonal forms and rich, encrusted, decoration. The portal of St Mary's North Porch would not have looked out of place in Toledo or Zaragoza.[1022]

The "Berkeley arches" too, have parallels in Iberian art. Similar designs used in door frames and tomb niches can be seen in churches in the Portuguese towns of Luz de Tavira, and Monchique, among other places. However, every indication is that in this case the influence is not flowing from south to north. The Iberian parallels post-date the Bristol and Berkeley structures by a considerable margin: they belong to the Manueline school of Portuguese architecture, and so were produced no earlier than the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Equally, while the portal of St Mary's North Porch seems inspired by Mudéjar precursors, its closest parallels also appear to be from the Manueline school, such as the chancel arch of Santa Maria Magdalena, Olivenza, and, particularly, the portals of the Capellas Imperfeitas in the Mosteiro da Batalha. The Capellas were begun in the 1430s under the patronage of Dom Duarte (d. 1438), but work continued for several decades (as their name suggests, they remain unfinished), and the Manueline portals date from the end of the fifteenth century. The North Porch portal appears to provide an analogue to those in the Capellas Imperfeitas as close to, if not closer than, any possible Iberian antecedents.[1023]

While the Bristol-Iberian commercial links could easily have facilitated the exchange of cultural models, and the apparent influence of Bristol styles on Portuguese architecture in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries probably did result from commercial contacts, the early fourteenth-century association with the Berkeleys suggests a more particular connection. The most likely conduits were either Maurice, Lord Berkeley (d. 1281), or his son, Lord Thomas Berkeley, who died in 1321. Both had

---

[1020] John H. Harvey, *The Master Builders: Architecture in the Middle Ages* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 82.
[1021] John H. Harvey, *The Mediaeval Architect* (London: Wayland, 1972), 95-6.
[1022] Bermard Bevan, *History of Spanish Architecture* (London: Batsford, 1938), 104-14; Andrés Calzada, *Historia de la arquitectura Española* (2nd edn, Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1949), 122-42; Niles Danby, *The Fires of Excellence: Spanish and Portuguese Oriental Architecture* (Reading: Garnet, 1997), 63-4, 90-105.
[1023] W. C. Watson, *Portuguese Architecture* (London: Archibald Constable, 1908), 171-80; J. H. Harvey, "Political and Cultural Exchanges between England and the Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages", in *Literature, Culture and Society of the Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of Ferran Vallis I Taberner*, , vol. 9, ed. M. Martínez López (Barcelona: Promociones Publicaciones Universitarias Barcelona, 1989), 2630-5.

been royal councillors and close companions of Edward I, and Thomas had been on diplomatic missions to Gascony. Gascony would have provided easy access to Castilian and Aragonese cultural developments. In 1320 Lord Thomas's son, Sir Maurice, soon to be Lord Berkeley, was appointed seneschal of Gascony, but this probably comes too late to suggest him as the architectural patron and, in any case, there is some doubt that he ever took up the post. He died six years later. Edward I's marriage to Eleanor of Castile in 1254 had created a dynastic link with the Castilian court, and cultural influences followed, so that the Berkeleys' courtly connections could have provided an alternative route.[1024]

[1024] *CMMBC,* vol. 1, xxix-xxxii; Sir Maurice's appointment: TNA C61/133: 104-5, (http://www.gasconrolls.org/edition/calendars/c61_33/document.html#it033_13_12f_104 [accessed 27/10/12]); Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (New Haven & London: Yale UP, 1997), 9-11.

APPENDIX III: *RICHARD THE REDELESS* AND *MUM AND THE SOTHSEGGER* AS BRISTOL POEMS

Richard the Redeless and *Mum and the Sothsegger* have long been appreciated by literary critics and historians as notable examples of later medieval alliterative poetry, and as informed, trenchant criticism of politics and society at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[1025] There has been considerable speculation as to their authorship. Despite apparently definitive internal evidence for a Bristol origin, this possibility has not found general acceptance. Instead, metropolitan, aristocratic or clerical loci of production have been favoured. Nonetheless, the following makes a case for seeing both of these poems as the work of one, Bristol, author. The poems' titles are modern attributions, drawn from characters and phrases in the texts. "*Richard*" refers to Richard II, who is "redeless", lacking counsel. "*Mum*" is the character who embodies political expediency and hypocrisy, and is welcomed into the counsels of the powerful; by contrast, the "*Sothsegger*" is the truth-teller, and courageous critical friend, who is spurned.

Richard is ostensibly a critique of Richard II's kingship. He is portrayed as coming to wield power at too young an age, ruling lawlessly, and presiding over a court that is extravagant, corrupt and vicious. He has promoted men of inferior birth to the highest ranks of the nobility, has surrounded himself with fops and flatterers, and has encouraged the practice of livery and maintenance, and all the evils of 'bastard feudalism' that ensue. In particular, his bodyguard of Cheshire archers has been used to cower opposition, intimidating parliament and riding roughshod over the lawcourts. To pay for all this Richard has levied unreasonable taxes and made illegal financial extortions. This is, in short, a damning condemnation of Richard II's 'tyranny'.

Mum is framed as a debate poem between the relative merits of "Mum" and the "Sothsegger", but with the outcome never in doubt. The poet-narrator seeks opinions on the matter from various groups and individuals, both clerical and lay, and uses this quest to satirise many aspects of contemporary politics and society. The church comes in for particular criticism, and the poet, while not necessarily himself a heretic, echoes many of the complaints voiced by Wycliffe and the Lollards.[1026] While there is guarded praise for Henry IV, mainly for his martial qualities, his government provides another major target, with repeated accusations that Henry insulates himself from wise counsel, is extravagant, extortionate in his demands for taxation, and heavy-handed in his treatment of dissent.

[1025] Unless otherwise stated, the following section draws mainly upon: *The Piers Plowman Tradition: A Critical Edition of Pierce the Plowman's Creed, Richard the Redeless, Mum and the Sothsegger and The Crowned King*, ed. H. Barr (London: M. Dent, 1993), and H. Barr, "A Study of *Mum and the Sothsegger* in its Political and Literary Contexts" (unpublished University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 2 vols., 1989). *Richard the Redeless* survives in Cambridge University Library MS L1 I 14, in a compilation dating to the second quarter of the fifteenth century, where it follows straight on from a copy of *Piers Plowman*. This may be significant, because both *Richard* and *Mum and the Sothsegger* were strongly influenced by Langland's poem. The manuscript was copied in a Chancery hand, suggesting that its origins lay in the bureaucratic milieu of Westminster: K. Kerby-Fulton and S. Justice, "Langlandian Reading Circles, 1380-1427", in *New Medieval Literatures*, ed. W. Scase, R. Copeland and D. Lawton, vol. I (OUP, 1997), 59-83, at 66. *Mum and the Sothsegger*'s only surviving copy was discovered by a West Country bookseller in 1928, and is now British Library Add. MS 41666. The manuscript probably dates from the third quarter of the fifteenth century: Barr, *Tradition*, 14; H. Barr, *Signes and Soth: Language in the Piers Plowman Tradition* (CUP, 1994), 17, n. 79, 22.

[1026] D. A. Lawton, "Lollardy in the 'Piers Plowman' Tradition", *Modern Language Review*, 76 (1981), 780-93, at 785-8 suggests that *Mum*'s author was a Lollard.

Helen Barr's linguistic analysis of both poems has demonstrated the strong likelihood that they were written by the same poet.[1027] Simon Horobin has described the dialect of both copies as having many elements common to both Somerset and south Gloucestershire English: the Bristol region is the only place where these would come together.[1028] Of course, the dialect of the copies may not have been that of the poems' creator, but given that the two poems appear in apparently unconnected collections, it is very likely that they were composed by someone whose own dialect belonged to, or was at least was heavily influenced by that of the Bristol region.

Richard presents itself as having been composed in the period between July and September 1399, when Richard II had lost power, but not yet his throne, and Henry Bolingbroke had taken power but not yet the throne. However, Barr has convincingly argued from internal evidence that the actual composition must have occurred after the 'Epiphany Plot' of January 1400. This is the latest event to which the poem appears to make allusion, so it was probably written soon afterwards. As for *Mum*, an apparent reference to the exemption, in 1409, of friars from the constraints on preaching imposed by Archbishop Arundel's *Constitutions*, the latest datable reference, suggests a date of composition in that year or soon after.[1029]

If it is accepted that one poet wrote both poems, the first soon after the commencement of Henry's reign, the second about ten years later, then the poems seem to give a sense of the poet's growing disillusionment over this span of years. Taking the poems at face value, Henry goes from being the princely Eagle of the first poem, set to right the wrongs of the previous regime, to the sullied, embattled politician of the second. However, this trajectory needs to be qualified somewhat by our understanding of the likely intentions behind the poems. Barr's dating of the poem means that *Richard* must be seen as advice not for Richard II, but for Henry, or his counsellors, drawing upon examples from the previous reign to warn against repeating these mistakes. The author's perception that the new king requires such instruction carries with it an implicit criticism. While the poet's stance in *Richard* can be described as cautiously optimistic, supportive of the new king but concerned that he may repeat the mistakes of his predecessor, by the time of *Mum* it is assuredly pessimistic.

Horobin's suggestion of Bristol authorship appears to be supported by the first few lines of *Richard*:

> And as I passid in my preiere ther prestis were at messe,
> In a blessid borugh that Bristow is named
> In a temple of the Trinite the toune even amyddis
> That Cristis Chirche is cleped amonge the comune peple
> (I, 1-4)[1030]

[1027] H. Barr, "The Relationship of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger"*, *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 4 (1990), 105-33. This interpretation has not been universally accepted; see, for example, F. Grady, "The Generation of 1399", in *The Letter of the Law: Legal Practice and Literary Production in Medieval England,* ed. E. Steiner and C. Barrington (Ithaca & London: Cornell UP, 2002), 202-29, at p. 205, n. 9.

[1028] S. Horobin, "The Dialect and Authorship of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger*", *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 18 (2004), 133-52.

[1029] H. Barr, "The Dates of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger*", *Notes and Queries,* 235 (September, 1990), 270-75; Barr, *Tradition*, 23.

[1030] All references to both poems are to Barr, *Tradition.* Scholarly editions also include, *Mum and the Sothsegger,* ed. M. Day and R. Steele, Early English Text Society, old series, 199 (Oxford, 1936), and *Richard the Redeless and Mum and the Sothsegger*, ed. J. M. Dean (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan UP,

This is Christ Church, or Holy Trinity Church, standing in the midst of the town. The lines clearly demonstrate knowledge of Bristol's topography. Horobin's work indicates an author who had spent most of his life in the Bristol area, but not, of course, necessarily living there when he wrote the poems. Most scholars who have discussed the poems' authorship have been reluctant to take *Richard*'s opening statement at face value. Implicit in this attitude seems to be an assumption that a provincial urban milieu was incapable of fostering such a sophisticated level of poetic accomplishment and political comment. Previous suggestions as to the poems' authorship have included a clerk of parliament or Chancery, a member of the household of Thomas, Lord Berkeley, or a man in some way connected with him, a member of the minor gentry, and a customs official. Each of these deserves consideration. Barr suggested that the poet may have been a clerk of parliament on the basis of his detailed knowledge of the law; as she has demonstrated, the poet's knowledge of legal terminology, legal texts, the workings of the law courts and of parliament, is displayed throughout both works.[1031] Kerby-Fulton and Justice, arguing along similar lines, have suggested a Chancery connection.[1032] More recently, Barr has posited a Berkeley link, drawing upon Ralph Hanna's work on the literary patronage of Lord Berkeley. Lord Thomas Berkeley had been the patron of John Trevisa, holder of the Berkeley living of Wotton-under-Edge, and famous as the translator of Latin texts into English.[1033] Barr has pointed to the particular interest shown in *Richard* towards the heirs of the Lords Appellants, the noble opposition movement that Richard crushed in 1397, among whom was Richard, son of Thomas earl of Warwick, who had married Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Berkeley, in 1392. She goes on to explain the poet's particular vehemence displayed towards Henry Green by reference to the fact that, as a grantee of Warwick's forfeited estates, Green benefited from the earl's fall. Also, the extensive use in *Mum* of the *De proprietatibus rerum* by Bartholomaeus Anglicus, translated by Trevisa, provides Barr with further evidence of a Berkeley connection.[1034]

Janet Coleman considered the possibility of a Bristol man as the poet, but concludes, following the suggestion of Arthur B. Ferguson, that he 'sounds like one of the lesser landed gentry who was acquainted with the parliaments of the late 1390s…'.[1035] Another candidate is John But, the man who named himself as the contributor to the A text of *Piers Plowman* ("And so bad Iohan But busily wel ofte"). He shared his name with the clerk to the comptroller of customs in Bristol in 1399. On this basis Hanna has suggested that the customs clerk may have been the man of the same name whom Thomas Chaucer, as chief butler, appointed as his deputy in the port of Barnstaple in Devon, and who was also active in Cornwall. This putative Chaucer connection has led John Bowers to posit this John But as the poet of *Richard* and *Mum*, since the latter shares some particular vocabulary (ll. 1212, 1703) with *The Tale of Beryn*, a Chaucerian continuation that must have been written very soon after Chaucer's death. However, Bowers makes this connection in the context of a timely warning

---

2000). References are given in parenthesis in the text, in the case of *Richard* line references are preceded by the passus number.

[1031] Barr, *Tradition*, 141.

[1032] Kerby-Fulton and Justice, "Langlandian Reading Circles", 76-80.

[1033] R. Hanna, "Sir Thomas Berkeley and his Patronage", *Speculum*, 64 (1989), 878-916, at 898-9.

[1034] H. Barr, *Socioliterary Practice in Late Medieval England* (OUP, 2001), 162.

[1035] J. Coleman, *English Literature in History, 1350-1400: Medieval Readers and Writers* (London: Hutchinson, 1981), 44, 119; A. B. Ferguson, "The Problem of Counsel in *Mum and the Sothsegger*", *Studies in the Renaissance*, 2 (1955), 67-83, at 67.

against too readily identifying poets on the basis of "isolated textual traces"![1036] In addition, Kerby-Fulton and Justice have suggested that "But" may in any case have been a *nom de plume,* thereby casting doubt on the identification of the customs official.[1037]

Horobin's dialect analysis disqualifies none of these suggestions except the last: apart from his position in the Bristol customs, there is nothing else to link John But with the Bristol region. Barr and Kerby-Fulton and Justice's clerk of parliament or Chancery, Barr's Berkeley client, and Coleman's gentleman might all have lived in this area. However, on the basis of internal evidence from both poems the poet is likely to have been not a Westminster civil servant, nor a country gentleman, but a Bristol merchant, probably with a Berkeley connection, but not a member of the Berkeley household or affinity. This argument is deployed in the following section.

The criticism of Richard II in *Richard* may have been prompted by no more than the poet's desire to be seen as a loyal Lancastrian, while at the same time providing himself with a collection of admonitory examples of bad kingship. On the other hand, turn of the century Bristolians had good reasons not to cherish the memory of their lately departed king.[1038] The criticisms of Henry IV voiced in *Mum* would also have found a sympathetic ear in Bristol. By the time of *Mum*'s composition a Bristol-based poet, particularly one involved in the cloth trade, might well have had sufficient resentment against Henry IV's policies to fuel the poem's vehement criticism. The political attitudes displayed in both poems fit with the politics of Bristol in the 1390s and early 1400s. However, the same could be said of many other communities, so the internal, textual, evidence must now be considered in more detail in order to support the suggestion of Bristol authorship.

Apart from *Richard*'s opening lines there is nothing else in the poems that links them explicitly to Bristol. However, there is much about them that suggests that their composer was a town-dweller, and given the dialect in which both are written, it is reasonable to suppose that that town was Bristol. In places it may be possible to detect further references to Bristol itself.

After describing his encounters with the clergy, the narrator of *Mum* turns, '… now to tounes and temporal lordz' (785), and goes on to list the orders of laity he will question, ranging from bondmen to sovereigns (788-93), but in the section that follows it is towns, and particularly mayors, that dominate; rural society is neglected (794-870).

The poet's frequent criticisms of unjust taxes tend to focus on the impositions levied on towns or on customs payments:

> Or be tallage of youre townnes without ony were
> (*Richard*, I.15)
> Whan the countis were caste with the custum of wullus
>
> ……..
>
> Withoute preiere at a parlement a poundage biside
> And a fifteneth and a dyme eke
> And with all the custum of the clothe that cometh to fayres?
> (*Richard*, IV.11, 14-16)

[1036] R. Hanna, *William Langland* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1993), 8, 30-1; J. Bowers, "*Piers Plowman's* William Langland: Editing the Text, Writing the Author's Life", *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 9 (1995), 65-92, at 88-9.

[1037] Kerby-Fulton and Justice, "Langlandian Reading Circles", 70-3.

[1038] This section amplifies a point made by Coleman, *Medieval Readers and Writers*, 45. For detailed commentary on the topical allusions in the poems, see Barr, "Study of *Mum* and the *Sothsegger*", 57-86.

The emphasis on customs on wool and cloth is matched by the poet's interest in clothing.[1039] In a passage in *Richard* criticising courtiers' extravagant fashions (a common theme in contemporary satire), the poet makes detailed comments, not only on the articles of clothing themselves,

> For wolde they blame the burnes that broughte newe gysis,
> And dryve out the dagges and all the Duche cotis
> (III. 192-3)

but also on how long it takes to produce them and how much they cost:

> But now ther is a gyse, the queyntest of all,
> A wondir coriouse crafte, ycome now late,
> That men clepeth kerving the clothe all to pecis,
> That sevene goode sowers sixe wekes after
> Moun not sett the seemes, ne sewe hem ageyn.
> (III. 162-6)

> For thei for the pesinge paieth pens ten duble
> That the cloth costened, the craft is so dere.
> (III. 168-9)

In a passage on how courtiers are only able to afford their extravagant clothes by borrowing money, it is the towns that bear the brunt:

> But [courtiers] beggith and borwith of burgeis in tounes
> Furris of foyne and other felle-whare,
> And not the better of a bene, though they boru evere
> (*Richard*, III.149-51)

When showing how the abuse of the royal livery of the white hart alienates loyal subjects, it is the opinion of townspeople that the poet singles out:

> So, trouthe to telle, as toune-men said,
> For on that ye merkyd, ye myssed ten schore
> Of homeliche hertis that the harme hente.
> (*Richard,* II. 41-3)

In *Richard*'s satire on parliament, the ramblings of a befuddled MP are so confused,

> That thei the conclucion than constrewe ne couthe,
> No burne of the benche of borowe nother ellis,
> (IV. 68-9)

While these references point towards a generic urban environment, the following are consonant with a specifically Bristol setting.

When the poet thinks of law courts and their officials, he is usually, it seems, thinking of these too in an urban setting. Rulers are supposed to enforce the law,

> And to merke meyntenourz with maces ichonne
> (*Richard*, III.268)
> While sergeantz the sechith to saise by the lappe
> (*Mum*, 250)

[1039] Nuttall, *Creation of Lancastrian Kingship*, 33-8.

The choice of a mace as the weapon of justice, rather than a sword, obviously allows alliteration on "meyntenourz", but it would also fit with what a Bristolian might have witnessed on a fairly regular basis. Bristol's sergeants are depicted carrying their maces in the "mayor-making" illustration in the *Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*; these were not ceremonial weapons, and a contemporary account of an affray in the town in 1496 describes how a sergeant placed his mace across the chest of a man he was attempting to arrest.[1040]

A long passage in *Mum* (801-40) on mayors as friends of Mum, contains two more possible references to Bristol. The first may refer to Bristol's Common Council:

> He toke no manere travers tenne yere togedre,
> Among the comun conseil lest he caste were,
> (815-6)

While several other large towns or cities had a Common Council, there was no other within the dialect area identified by Horobin.[1041] The other reference appears to relate to Bristol's civic officials:

> The sunne and the sergeantz my sight so dasid
> That I might not eche messe merke as me luste.
> (833-4)

At first sight puzzling, this reference to being dazed by the sergeants is explained by the civic livery worn by the Bristol sergeants, made up of striped, or "rayed", cloth: hence, the narrator is dazzled by the sergeants' rays, as though they were the rays of the sun.[1042] *Mum*'s lengthy diatribes against civic government suggest that the author had direct experience of its workings from the inside, in other words, that he was, or had been, a member of Bristol's common council.

That Bristol's MPs were knights of the shire rather than just mere parliamentary burgesses may account for the formulation, "citiseyns of shiris", used in *Richard* to describe MPs other than "knyghtis of the comunete" (IV. 42), and for the general lack of mention of parliamentary burgesses, as opposed to "knightz for the commune" (*Mum*,

---

[1040] A witness to an attempted arrest in Bristol in 1496 reported how "…oon John Bruer, a sergeaunt of the said Toun, settyng his mace upon his [i.e. the miscreant's] brest …": *GWBB*, 64.

[1041] Bath was governed by the "mayor and commonalty", with bailiffs as the chief officers under the mayor: *The Municipal Records of Bath, 1189 to 1604*, ed. A. J. King and B. H. Watts (London, n.d.), vii, viii; P. Davenport, *Medieval Bath Uncovered* (Stroud: Tempus, 2002), 99. The governing body of Wells, in uneasy association with the bishop of Bath and Wells, was the "Community", under the "Master": D. G. Shaw, *The Creation of a Community: The City of Wells in the Middle Ages* (OUP, 1993), 129-38. Gloucester was governed by two bailiffs and stewards: S. Reynolds, "1483: Gloucester and Town Government in the Middle Ages", in *The 1483 Gloucester Charter in History*, ed. N. M. Herbert, R. A. Griffiths, S. Reynolds & P. Clark (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1983), 40-51, at 44. Admittedly, the description of Mum and the mayor could refer to London, which also had a common council and sergeants: Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages,* 121-95. For a general discussion of common councils see Tait, *The Medieval English Borough,* 302-38.

[1042] Ricart, *Kalendar* contains a list of civic liveries to be distributed annually in Bristol, compiled in 1479-80, which includes: "To euery of the Maires Sergeauntez, and of the Shirefis Sergeauntez, xxxvj rayes …" (81).

1119).[1043] Whether this was a genuine oversight, or a deliberate ploy to distance Bristol from what the poet may have regarded as lesser entities is open to question.[1044]

On both occasions when the poet turns his critical gaze upon abbeys, it is the "abbeys of Augustyn" that come to his mind (*Mum,* 537, 861), perhaps because the most prominent religious house in Bristol was St Augustine's Abbey. *Richard* appears to contain the first instance in English literature of the use of the phrase 'wild Irish' to describe the Gaelic population ('wilde Yrisshe', I. 10). Given Bristol's large Irish community, with whom relations were not always harmonious, such a phrase might have come easily to mind for a Bristol poet.[1045]

The Bristol merchants' intransigence in the matter of customs payments may have been cynical opportunism, pure and simple, but *Mum* suggests that there was a genuine sense that the king had gone back on his word. In a passage in which he describes Bolingbroke's landing in England in 1399, the poet tells how many complained to him of injustices,

> And were behote high helpe, I herde hit myself
> Ycried at the crosse, and was the kingis wille
> Of custume and of coylaige the communes shuld be easid.
> But how the covenant is ykepte I can not discryve
> For with the kingis cunseil I come but silde.
> (147-151)

Barr suggests that the "crosse" was a reference to St Paul's Cross in London, but given the likely Bristol context for the poem, it is perhaps more plausibly to be read as Bristol's High Cross, the usual place at which proclamations were made.[1046] This passage may either refer to the proclamation of the 15 September grant or, possibly, to an otherwise unrecorded promise made at the High Cross when Henry reached Bristol on 28 July. If the latter, then there is the further possibility that, along the lines of the proclamation at Knaresborough, this was more generous than the terms of the grant made in September. In any case, *Mum* is clearly suggesting that Henry was thought to have reneged on his promise.

There can be little doubt that the author had strong Bristol connections, and although it is impossible to establish definitively whether or not his poems were composed in Bristol, it is likely that he had his home town in mind whilst writing. References within the poems suggest much more about the poet. He had a keen interest in politics, and in *Richard* he displays a sound knowledge of recent political history up to January 1400; *Mum* is far less detailed, partly because the surviving text of the poem has moved its critical focus from the king and his court to society in general, but it may be that at the time of writing the poet was no longer moving in well-informed political circles, or feared to be too specific.[1047] In both poems he is critical of the royal household and of courtiers. He had probably attended parliament, and his extended satire on parliament at the end of *Richard* seems to reflect events at the 1397/8

[1043] Although "citiseyn" could also refer to an inhabitant of a country or region: *The Middle English Dictionary*, vol. 2, ed. H. Kurath and S. M. Kuhn (Ann Arbor, 1959), 284.
[1044] By 1409 there were only 4 other English provincial towns with shire status: York, Newcastle, Norwich, Lincoln (S. H. Rigby and E. Ewan, "Government, Power and Authority, 1300-1540", in *CUHB,* 291-312, at 299.
[1045] E. D. Snyder, "The Wild Irish: A Study of some English Satires against the Irish, Scots, and Welsh", M*odern Philology*, 17 (1920), 147-85; Fleming, "Identity and Belonging", 175-93.
[1046] Barr, *Tradition*, 298, ll. 147-9 n.
[1047] Barr, "Study of *Mum and the Sothsegger*", 72.

Westminster/Shrewsbury Parliament (IV, 20-93). According to James Simpson, the "author of *Richard the Redeless* speaks for parliament", and he sees the poet of *Mum* as also adopting the "parliamentary voice", pressing the rights and responsibilities of parliament to communicate both criticism and advice to the king.[1048] Also, several criticisms in *Richard* seem to have been drawn from the *gravamina* levelled against Richard II at the September 1399 Parliament and incorporated into the *Record and Process,* an account of the abdication and deposition widely circulated by the new Lancastrian regime.[1049] The poet was sympathetic to religious reform, and his work echoed many of the criticisms voiced by Wycliffe and the Lollards. He may have been in favour of the disendowment of the Church, of which he was very critical: he had a particular dislike of the friars.

He seems not to have been a member of the nobility or gentry. Rather, he had a mercantile outlook, being much concerned with customs, and in particular taxes on wool and cloth.[1050] He displays a knowledge of ships and sailing. Imbedded in *Richard*'s satire on parliament is an eleven-line extended metaphor comparing the MPs to the crew of a stricken ship (IV. 71-82). This uses a string of nautical terms, including the phrase 'a-lee' (1253), which the *Middle-English Dictionary* finds nowhere except here and in *Mum* ('a-leehalf', 1253).[1051] While the "ship of state" and "ship of fools" imagery was a common literary convention, this level of detail suggests first-hand nautical experience. *Mum* is scattered with Latin quotations from the Bible, but its author was probably not a cleric. Emily Steiner sees *Mum* as a 'secularisation' of William Langland's search for spiritual truth, recasting it in a political context.[1052] The poet does not seem to have had a university education, but he was well-read and valued reading serious literature.[1053] He had considerable legal expertise, legal terminology pervades both poems, and he refers not only to a variety of legal instruments and writs but also to Roman, Canon and Civil Law texts.[1054] In Steiner's view, legal documents are for the poet "the justification for and very structure of his literary enterprise".[1055] In addition to Langland's *Piers Plowman*, he was influenced by John Trevisa's translations of *De proprietatibus rerum* and *De regimine principum*. While he clearly had access to these two works, commissioned by Lord Berkeley, he is highly unlikely to have shared Trevisa's patron. The poems do not fit with the educational programme that Hanna has suggested as the context for Trevisa's work, and there is no evidence that Berkeley commissioned anything else like *Richard* and *Mum.* Berkeley would have been an unlikely patron, given *Mum*'s criticism both of Henry IV, with whom Berkeley was on very good terms, and of the church, particularly of Augustinian abbeys, whose Bristol representative the Berkeleys had founded. The poet's sympathy for Wycliffite ideas

[1048] J. Simpson, *The Oxford English Literary History, Volume 2. 1350-1547: Reform and Cultural Revolution* (OUP, 2002), 214-7.
[1049] Barr, *Tradition*, 253-4, 288; Nuttall, *Creation of Lancastrian Kingship*, 9-10, 17-18. The wide circulation of parliamentary and official texts means that it was not only civil servants who would have had access to them, an assumption implicit in Kerby-Fulton and Justice, "Langlandian Reading Circles", 78-80.
[1050] Barr, *Signes*, 44-5
[1051] Barr, *Tradition*, 290, 346.
[1052] E. Steiner, *Documentary Culture and the Making of Medieval English Literature* (CUP, 2003), 178-9. I am grateful to Helen Barr for alerting me to this work.
[1053] Barr, *Tradition*, 16-7.
[1054] Barr, *Signes*, 137-41.
[1055] Steiner, *Documentary Culture*, p. 179.

would not have found favour with Berkeley, who sat on the 1414 commission to extirpate Lollardy in Bristol.

While extrapolation from literary texts to the anonymous author's biography must always be speculative, it is possible to construct a likely profile for the poet. He was a Bristolian, probably a merchant, perhaps specialising in some aspect of textiles; he had experience of parliament, including the 1397/8 Parliament, and he also had a good knowledge of legal texts and legal practice; he was well-read, but probably not university educated. He had a keen interest in politics, and was well-informed about national events; he was deeply critical of Ricardian government, but by around 1409/10 that criticism extended to Henry IV, by which time the poet also had trenchant and well-informed criticisms of civic government. He supported religious reform, being a bitter critic of the shortcomings of the Church, and his attitudes may have bordered on heretical. He had access to at least some of the translations of John Trevisa, and may have been connected in some way with Lord Berkeley, but his work was not commissioned by him. It may be possible to go further, and to identify an individual whose known career and connections fit with this broad outline. While there were numerous Bristol merchants who had served in the town's common council, the number of MPs who sat in the 1390s is much smaller, and therefore this is where the search is focused.[1056]

The evidence for Bristol's parliamentary representation in the 1390s is incomplete: we do not know, for example, who sat in the 1397-8 parliament, but six Bristol MPs have been identified as sitting in this decade. Five of these can be discounted. Three died too early to have been authors of *Mum*.[1057] The public careers of John Stevens and Thomas Norton initially promise a better fit with the poet's suggested profile. Stevens (d. 1425/30) (Bristol MP in 1391 and 1393), was much employed by Henry IV, a common councillor to at least 1425, constable of the Bristol staple from 1414 to 1425 and collector of customs intermittently between 1395 and 1412. Norton (d. 1435) (MP in the period 1399 to 1421) was sheriff in 1401-2, mayor in 1413-4, and a royal commissioner under Henry IV. However, both sat on the 1414 commission to suppress Lollardy in Bristol.[1058] In view of the sentiments expressed in *Mum*, it is unlikely that the poet would have gone on to help persecute Lollards. In addition, it is hard to believe that he would have continued at the heart of civic government after having penned such vehement criticism of mayors and common council.

This leaves William Frome (d. 1413) (MP 1383, 1390, 1391 and January 1397), a cloth manufacturer and exporter, mayor in 1394-5 and 1400-1, and common councillor from 1381 to at least 1409-10.[1059] During the 1390s he was much involved with Bristol castle, as purveyor of the works and deputy to the royal clerk of the works; the latter post he held until at least December 1399. Over the course of the 1380s and '90s Frome amassed considerable parliamentary experience, and his repeated re-elections indicate that his expertise was much appreciated by the electorate. Christian Liddy has suggested that he was among those who in 1390 drafted a parliamentary petition

[1056] Anthony Gross suggested that the author of *Mum* was a Bristol MP: 'Langland's rats: A moralist's view of parliament', *Parliamentary History*, 9 (1990), pp. 286-301.
[1057] Roskell, *History of Parliament*, vol. 2, pp. 164-6 (Thomas Beaupyne (d. 1404)), vol. 2, pp. 113-5 (John Banbury (d 1404/5)), vol. 4, pp. 7-8 (Richard Panes (d 1406/7 and had limited experience of civic or royal service).
[1058] Roskell, *History of Parliament*, vol. 4, pp. 474-5 (Stevens), vol. 3, pp. 852-4 (Norton).
[1059] Unless otherwise indicated, this paragraph is based on Roskell, *History of Parliament*, vol. 3, pp. 135-6.

complaining of fraud in the cloth trade.[1060] As he was an MP in January 1397 he might well have sat in the 1397-8 parliament as well. He was busy on royal commissions in the first two years of Henry IV's reign, but after 1401 he had little royal employment, his sole appearance as a royal commissioner being on the 1408 investigation into maladministration at St John's Hospital. While he continued as a member of common council until at least 1410, and was party to electoral indentures drawn up in 1407 and 1411, he held no other office in the twelve years between the end of his final mayoralty and his death, an unusual circumstance for a fifteenth-century former mayor. His virtual retirement from active public life is unlikely to have been the result of ill-health, since he appears frequently in property transactions during this period.[1061] If we are right to see *Richard* and *Mum* as marking the poet's growing disenchantment with, and distancing from, the public sphere, then Frome's biography would appear to fit.

William Frome was probably not born in Bristol. Before him, the only individuals bearing the Frome surname found there were Clarice and her son Walter Frome, burgess, in 1329.[1062] Neither reappears in the records surveyed. Rather, William was probably a member of a Dorset gentry family. The only other occurrence of a William Frome discovered during the Bristol William's lifetime comes in the 1404 will of John Frome, an esquire of Buckingham and of Woodlands in Dorset. He left bequests to his three brothers, Thomas, a priest, Richard, and William.[1063] John was the son and heir of William Frome esquire of Woodlands by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of John de Brewes, or Braose, by whom the Buckinghamshire estates came into the family. This William was probably born around 1308 and died in or soon after 1361. He was employed extensively as a royal commissioner throughout the West Country, including Bristol.[1064] William might be expected to have named his first-born son after himself; he may have done so, but if this son had died between the births of John and of a younger son, then the father's name might well have been reused. In addition to Dorset and Buckinghamshire, John Frome had interests in Somerset and Wiltshire, and he was a feoffee in Hampshire with William Stourton, the Bristol recorder.[1065] John's brother Thomas was a canon of Wells and died in 1424. In his will Thomas left bequests to the four Bristol friaries.[1066] The William mentioned in John's will was probably identical with the Bristol merchant. If William Frome of Bristol was a younger son of this Dorset gentry family, then it is perfectly conceivable that as a youth he would have been apprenticed to a Bristol merchant. If so, he would have spent at least thirty years in Bristol by the time of the poems' composition: long enough to have acquired elements of the local dialect.

[1060] *LRBB*, vol. 1, pp. 114-5 (Frome's election to Common Council, 1381); Liddy, *War*, pp. 153, 159;
[1061] BRO P/St.T/D/54, 133, 246-8, 292; *LRBB*, vol. 1, p. 137.
[1062] BRO GWB/5163/46. The following statements are based on an extensive search of the following: the on-line catalogues of the BRO, TNA, and A2A sites, *CPR, CCR, CFR, CIPM, Calendars of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, CChR, LRBB, & GRBB,* for the period 1300-1422.
[1063] TNA PROB 11/2a/7. A William Frome, rector of Lewisham in Kent in 1431, is unlikely to have been the brother of John, since he would have to have been at least 70 by that date, and the William mentioned in John's will is not described as a cleric: E Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, vol. 1 (1797), pp. 503-526.
[1064] TNA SC 8/98/4868-9; *CIPM*, vols. 9, no. 595, 11, no. 129; Carus-Wilson, *Overseas Trade of Bristol*, pp. 31-3. He was the son of Reginald Frome (d. 1334): *CIPM*, vol. 7, no. 547, *CCR, 1333-37*, p. 164.
[1065] Roskell, *History of Parliament*, vol. 3, pp. 133-5; *CCR, 1413-19*, p. 139; J. S. Roskell, 'William Stourton of Stourton: speaker in the Parliament of 1413', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Soc.*, 82 (1961 for 1960), pp. 155-66.
[1066] A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A. D. 1500*, vol. 2 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 730; Holmes, *Register of Nicholas Bubwith*, vol. 2, pp 455-7.

William Frome's will is unusual, and the evidence it provides of his attitudes and personal relations is consistent with his identification as the poet.[1067] The will was made in January 1413, and proved the following April. It lacks the usual invocations to saints, does not make provision for the payment of forgotten tithes, and is almost casual about prayers for the testator's soul. William asked to be buried in St Thomas' church. Bequests are few: 30 yards of russet and white cloth were left for gowns for six poor men and five poor women to pray to the Virgin for his soul's salvation, while any chaplains offering prayers for his soul at St Thomas or St Mary Redcliffe were to receive 4d; there were also bequests of 6s 8d each to the fraternities of St John the Baptist and St Mary in the chapel of the Assumption on Bristol Bridge. He left a widow, Christine, and a son, Thomas, who were appointed his executors. No other living person is mentioned by name. There is, alas, no mention of any books. The impression given by this document, of a man isolated from his peers, is to some extent reinforced by the evidence of other wills. Frome is not mentioned in any of the wills in Bristol's Great Orphan Book between 1403 and 1413, nor in the extant wills of former Bristol mayors and sheriffs proved before the Canterbury prerogative court for the same period.[1068]

It was common for testators of Frome's rank to leave bequests to the Bristol houses of the four orders of friars, to the cathedrals of Worcester or Wells, and to make greater provision for prayers than is the case here. If he was the poet, then these omissions are readily explicable, and reflect perfectly the poet's hostility towards the established Church, and particularly the friars, and clergy greedy for tithes.[1069] Frome's preference for religious fraternities seems to be in keeping with the poet's attitudes, as does his concern for the poor. Frome was a cloth merchant, and as we have seen the poet shows a keen and informed interest in cloth, clothes, and tailoring. As a merchant, he would have been familiar with the nautical references deployed in *Richard*. Frome's request that the poor pray to the Virgin for his soul (she is the only saint mentioned in his will) may be significant, given that 'by Marie of hevene' is the poet's common invocation, repeated three times in *Mum* (454, 672, 1089).

The poet's particular animus against hospitals and Augustinian abbeys may partly be explained with reference to William Frome's experiences. He was on the 1404 commission that deposed Seynt Powle as master of St John's Hospital, and the sorry recent history of that institution could have done little to convince him of the notion of hospitals as holy houses.[1070] This was not the only Bristol religious house to be the focus of conflict. In 1399 a group of townsmen attacked the Treen mill, owned by St Augustine's abbey, in a dispute over the right of way across the Treen brook. Allegedly, the leader of this attack was none other than the mayor, John Canynges. Canynges and Frome were frequent associates, and in 1400 the latter acted as arbiter in a Canynges family dispute.[1071]

Frome's final mayoralty, after which he disappeared from high-profile public life, was eventful. He had already been on commissions to enquire into the whereabouts of the Ricardians' concealed treasure in December 1399 and May 1400, and he was so commissioned again, as mayor, in October 1400. Eight years later he was still being called to account by the Exchequer on this matter. In November 1400 he accounted at

[1067] TNA PROB 11/2A/26.
[1068] PCC wills of John Barstaple, Thomas Knapp, Thomas Gloucester (TNA PROB 11/2A)
[1069] In *Mum* tithes are described as 'God's part' - 'Godis parte let Godis men [ie the poor] have hit' (ll. 657-9).
[1070] *CPR, 1396-9*, pp. 332, 429, 452, 510; Holmes, *Register of Nicholas Bubwith*, vol. 1, pp. lx-lxi.
[1071] *CPR, 1396-9*, p. 585; TNA SC8/250/12456; *LRBB*, vol. 2, p. 214.

the Exchequer for his fellow merchants' tax arrears. Shortly before leaving office in September 1401 he presided over an inquiry into the riots of April 1400, and was still involved with the consequent investigations and trials in the following November.[1072] During the first two years of the new king's reign, while William Frome experienced the apogee of his career in royal and civic service, he also witnessed at first hand the disruptive consequences of the Crown's ill-considered policies. Not that he would necessarily have absolved his fellow citizens from their share of blame for these disturbances. From her reading of *Richard* and *Mum*, Barr concluded that the poet, while not an original political thinker, was deeply committed to the law, well-versed in its operation, was interested in practical politics, in how to make society run smoothly, and was convinced of the need for social discipline.[1073] Such a profile would fit a mayor of Bristol. Such a one witnessing the mob violence of January and April 1400, while perhaps recognising the Crown's share of responsibility, would have been strengthened in his conviction that firm rule was required if anarchy was to be avoided. Such a man might even recommend Ghengis Khan as a suitable role model, as the *Mum* poet does (1413-56).[1074]

The range of reference exhibited by the two poems extends not only to national politics and events in London in the 1390s, but also to legal, Biblical and literary texts.[1075] William Frome seems a good fit in terms of his career, and what his will suggests of his attitudes, but it still remains to be established that a provincial cloth merchant could have had the poet's breadth and depth of intellectual references, including familiarity with *Piers Plowman* and the translations of John Trevisa, and his knowledge of high politics.

Assuming that William Frome had Dorset origins, he could have attended schools in Bridport, Shaftesbury or, possibly, Sherborne.[1076] This would have given him a sound basis in Latin. William had twice been mayor, and as such he would have presided over the mayor's court. He would therefore have been very familiar with the writs and processes detailed in the poems. The jurisdiction of his court, and the other Bristol courts, such as Tolzey and Pie Powder, covered not only commercial disputes and debts, but also the conveyance of real property, including land, and probate. He also sat on commissions of gaol delivery, trying the inmates of Bristol's Newgate prison for felony.[1077] His wife, Christine (whom he had married by 1391), was the widow of John Woderove (d. 1381/4), who had been Bristol's town clerk during the period 1370 to 1381, and who wrote some legal Latin documents in his own hand.[1078] If William Frome inhabited a similar intellectual milieu to Woderove, or indeed, to a later town clerk, Robert Ricart, then the composition of poetry need not have been beyond him.

[1072] *CPR, 1399-1401,* pp. 209, 312, 521; *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, 1399-1422*, vol. 7, nos. 139, 152-4; TNA E101/513/5, E122/17/3, KB9/191, mm. 16-8.

[1073] Barr, 'Study of *Mum and the Sothsegger*', pp. 244-5.

[1074] For the autocratic tendencies of mayors see Fleming, 'Telling tales of oligarchy in the late medieval town', pp. 177-93.

[1075] Barr, *Signes*, pp. 137-149.

[1076] Orme**,** *Education in the West of England*, 95-6, 103-4.

[1077] *GRBB*, Part 1, "Introduction", passim. For examples of Mayor William Frome presiding over the Bristol probate court see Wadley, *Notes or Abstracts*, 42, 57, the mayor's court, BRO P/AS/D/WSS/23; debt cases, TNA C241/188/3, 184/52, 79, 108, 115, 190/32, 193/78, and gaol delivery, *CPR, 1399-1401*, pp. 520, *CPR, 1391-6,* p. 594.

[1078] BRO P.AS/D/HS/A/10; P.AS/D/HS/A/14 (a); TNA C241/17/43. An ordinance of 1449 lists the various writs that the town clerk could expect to handle: *GRBB*, *Text, Part. 1*, 119-21.

Neither does the influence of Trevisa and Langland put William Frome out of the running. The Woderoves were close associates of the Cheddar family, and the Cheddars in turn were clients of the Berkeleys. William Cheddar junior, who was a feoffee of the Woderove lands until at least 1413, was the priest of Wotton-under-Edge, Trevisa's former parish. This link could easily have put William Frome in touch with Trevisa's works.[1079] As for Langland, recent work on the literature connected with the great rebellion of 1381 has suggested that the imagery of *Piers Plowman* was employed by the rebel leaders, while a copy of the poem was owned by a London minor cleric. If yeomen and craftsmen in London and south-east England could know of Langland's work, then it is by no means impossible that a Bristol merchant should have been able to get access to a copy.[1080] While John But, the Bristol customs official, was not our author, he may have been the man who introduced William Frome to *Piers Plowman*.

There still remains the problem of the poet's familiarity with events and personalities at the highest political levels, particularly as demonstrated in *Richard.* A Bristol mayor and MP could be expected to share the poet's knowledge of the law, civic government and parliament, but not, necessarily, of the royal council. Frome's own record of royal service was impressive for a provincial townsman, but it would not have given him an entrée into such a rarefied atmosphere. William Frome did not enjoy such access, but John Frome did.

John was conspicuous in Henry's service from his accession until 1403. In March 1401 Henry agreed to the Commons' request that the royal council be expanded, and one of the first new appointmees was John Frome esquire, MP for Dorset. He can presumably be seen as a man acceptable to the Commons, perhaps even, in a sense, 'their' candidate. He attended council meetings on thirty occasions until February 1403.[1081] William and John Frome's careers as royal servants blossomed simultaneously, albeit the former's at a lower level; such a pattern would be consistent with an elder brother helping along his younger sibling. However, William's virtual disappearance from public life was not the result of losing an influential patron: it predates John's removal from the king's council chamber by nearly eighteen months. John's absence from the Council after February 1403 and his death the following year may be one reason for *Mum*'s less detailed commentary on contemporary politics, if his removal from the centre of power meant that the poet could no longer rely on his

---

[1079] BRO P.AS/D/HS/A/8, 10; *LRBB*, vol. 2, 53; *GRBB*, *Text, Part 1*, 233, 443, 250, *Part. 2*, 170-4, 180, 200; *CMMBC*, vol. 1, 443, 482, 516-7, 519, vol. 2, 959.

[1080] S. Justice, *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (Berkeley: California UP, 1994), 232; R. F. Green, "John Balle's Letters: Literary History and Historical Literature", in *Chaucer's England: Literature in Historical Context*, ed. B. Hanawalt (Minnesota: Minnesota UP, 1992), 176-200; G. Dodd, "A Parliament Full of Rats? *Piers Plowman* and the Good Parliament of 1376", *Historical Research*, 79 (2006), 21-49. Copies of *Piers Plowman* were owned by several gentry, lawyers and bourgeoisie: J. M. Bowers, "*Piers Plowman* and the Police: Notes towards a History of the Wycliffite Langland", *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 6 (1992), 1-50, at 21-3; J. A. Burrow, "The Audience of *Piers Plowman*", *Anglia*, 75 (1957), 373-84. "Whether laymen or ecclesiastics, their customary activities involved them in counsel, policy, education, administration, pastoral care …": A. Middleton, "The Audience and Public of *Piers Plowman*", in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and its Literary Background*, ed. D. A. Lawton (CUP, 1982), 101-23, at 104; Robert A. Wood, "A 14th-Century London Owner of *Piers Plowman*", *Medium Aevum,* 53 (1984), 83-90. At least two copies of *Piers Plowman* were made by West-Country scribes, one of which was produced c. 1400: A. McIntosh et al., *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English*, vol. 3 (Aberdeen, 1986), 147, 150 (http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/elalme/elalme.html). A copy also found its way to Ireland: Kerby-Fulton and Justice, "Langlandian Reading Circles", 80-3.

[1081] A. L. Brown, "The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV", *EHR*, 79 (1964), 1-30; J. L. Kirby, "Councils and Councillors of Henry IV, 1399-1413", *TRHS*, 5th series, 14 (1964), 35-65.

brother for information.[1082] In addition to his court connections, John Frome may have moved in literary circles: in 1391 he was the executor of the will of John, Lord Arundel, and his continuing association with Arundel's widow, Lady Zouche, might have brought him into the circles of Chaucer and the 'Lollard knights' Sir Lewis Clifford and Sir Thomas Clanvow, the latter another lay author of a moralistic text.[1083]

The missing opening of *Mum* dealt with Henry IV's household, and evidently concluded that absent from this establishment was a truthteller – the S*othsegger* – or, in other words, the poet himself.[1084] If *Richard* was written as advice to the new king, then implicit in *Mum*'s conception is the belief that this advice had been ignored. This suggests that the poet intended the first poem to be presented to Henry, or, perhaps more likely, to his councillors, that this presentation either did not happen or did not lead to the hoped-for response, and that the second poem was in part a reaction to this failure; as such, the readership for both poems would have been severely limited.[1085] *Richard* had failed in its purpose, while *Mum* could not have circulated beyond a few like-minded readers without considerable risk. This might explain why each poem is only extant in a single manuscript, although it is not unusual for alliterative poems to survive in unique copies.[1086] If William Frome intended to present *Richard* before February 1403, then the means might have been his putative brother John.

Accepting that William Frome was the author, and that John Frome was his brother, suggests further possibilities. One is that William, thinking himself high in royal favour in Henry's first two years, sought to promote himself still further by presenting a book of advice. Alternatively, genuinely believing in the power of words to influence politics, as well as in his duty as a subject to offer counsel where he perceived it to be needed, William may have been impelled to compose *Richard* by his unsettling experience of Henry's rule, perhaps doing so soon after his last mayoralty.[1087] This is the likelier of the two possibilities, since there were easier ways of pleasing a king than through admonishing him with unwelcome truths. In either case it is surely not surprising that his efforts would have been met with rejection: that a provincial cloth merchant should dare to advise a king might well have been regarded as presumptuous in the extreme.[1088] In addition, by situating his poem in the months between Richard's

---

[1082] Might the line in Mum, "For with the kingis cunseil I come but silde" (151), refer to John's absence from the Council?

[1083] E. Rickert, "Some English Letters of 1402", *Review of English Studies*, 8 (1932), 257-63, at 263 n. 3; McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 199-206 and passim. John's literary connections might have given William access to *The Tale of Beryn*, while literary circles would not have been exclusively "Chaucerian" and "Langlandian", thereby raising the possibility of another means by which William Frome might have been introduced to *Piers Plowman*: Kerby-Fulton and Justice, 63-4.

[1084] Nuttall, *Creation of Lancastrian Kingship*, 51.

[1085] *Richard*, Passus 1, ll. 59-61, suggest that the poem was intended for a restricted audience, whose experience as councillors would enable them to amend what was amiss in the work. Kerby-Fulton and Justice's reading of this passage as alluding to a literary coterie goes against the clear identification within this passage of the king, royal councillors and royal clerks as the intended audience ("Langlandian Reading Circles", 77-80).

[1086] Barr, "Study of *Mum and the* Sothsegger", 114 suggests that both poems may have been suppressed. For manuscript survival, see A. I. Doyle, "The Manuscripts", in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and its Literary Background,* ed. D. Lawton (CUP, 1982), 88-100.

[1087] Barr, "Study of *Mum and the* Sothsegger", 53. Individual conscience was highly valued by the poet: Nuttall, *Creation of Lancastrian Kingship*, 54.

[1088] Barr, "Study of *Mum and the* Sothsegger", 57. J. Ferster, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania UP, 1996), discusses the politics and dangers of advice literature.

loss of power and dethronement, the poet might have been too clever for his own good: the ploy may have been intended to distance him somewhat from the charge of presumption in seeking to advise Henry (since, ostensibly, his advice was directed towards Richard), but after Richard's very public funeral in March 1400 Henry was plagued by seditious rumours of his predecessor's survival, and so any text which, even as a literary device, suggested that Richard still lived is likely to have been treated with suspicion.[1089] Frome's misjudgement would have discouraged any further employment in Crown service. His subsequent distancing from civic government may have been self-imposed, or a local ramification of his *faux pas*.[1090]

The extant text of *Richard* ends with an impasse: under Richard II parliament, the institution that should be saving him from himself, is paralysed by fear and venality. There is no hope for Richard, and this ending, or rather failure to bring things to a satisfactory ending, has been interpreted as the poet's failure to find a way out of the vicious circle of bad rule and ineffective counsel.[1091] However, the nightmare world of Richard II's England is not a closed system: the poem begins by heralding the appearance of the one who promised to break that vicious circle. Only just and effective rule could resolve the situation, and this could only come from Henry Bolingbroke. But the record of his first two years had not been auspicious, and he could only fulfil the hopes invested in him if he learned from the mistakes of his predecessor and took the advice proffered by wise counsellors: hence the urgency and importance of the task to which the poet saw his work contributing. As we have it, the text is unfinished, possibly because the poet left it that way, possibly because a conclusion to the final passus that explicitly presented Henry as the solution was thought inappropriate or irrelevant by the later copyist working in the second quarter of the fifteenth century.

Another impasse ends the extant text of *Mum*. Here the whole purpose of the poem seems to be negated by Henry's refusal, or inability, to take sound advice: the king is isolated from good counsel, and so it is impossible to present him with the poem, or with any other book of advice.[1092] In fact, by the probable date of the poem's composition, 1409-10, Henry IV was stricken with illness and had surrendered the reins of government to his Council. The poem's portrayal of a king removed from the exercise of power is essentially an accurate reflection of this situation. The Council, led by Archbishop Arundel, the scourge of religious reformers, is likely to have been regarded

---

[1089] J. Burden, "How do you bury a Deposed King? The Funeral of Richard II and the Establishment of Lancastrian Royal Authority in 1400", in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime,* ed. G. Dodd and D. Biggs (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 35-54; P. McNiven, "Rebellion, Sedition and the Legend of Richard II's Survival", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 76 (1994), 93-117; Simon K. Walker, "Rumour, Sedition, and Popular Protest in the Reign of Henry IV", *Past and Present*, 166 (2000), 31-65; Philip Morgan, "Henry IV and the Shadow of Richard II", in *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Rowena Archer (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), 1-31.

[1090] It may be pushing supposition too far to suggest that John's disappearance from the Council after February 1403 was a result of *Richard*'s negative reception at court: ill health is a more likely explanation. However, assuming William to have been the poet, it would not be surprising if he was distanced from the rest of his family as his views became more outspoken, even if they had not been deemed partly responsible for John's removal from the Council. Estrangement may be suggested by the will of Richard Frome of Salisbury, made in 1407. Richard's precise relationship to John is unclear, but he provides prayers for John's soul and for the soul of his brother Richard, who must therefore have died between 1404 and 1407; he also leaves a bequest for their brother Thomas, but there is no mention of William, perhaps because by then he was *persona non grata* (TNA PROB 11/2a/14).

[1091] M. Giancarlo, *Parliament and Literature in Late Medieval England* (CUP, 2007), 237.

[1092] Ferster, *Fictions of Advice*, 36-8.

with deep suspicion by anyone holding the opinions of the *Mum* poet.[1093] To compound the problem, the poet himself argues that the king's subjects have no right, as private individuals, to make public criticisms of their rulers. Ghengis Khan, as the personification of good, firm government, brooks no criticism. Such an attitude on the part of the poet would seem to condemn his own poem as subversive, denying himself a legitimate position from which to criticise government, be it at royal or civic level. However, according to Matthew Giancarlo, *Mum*'s figure of the franklin-beekeeper, standing outside and above the hive, removing parasitic drones but at no time presenting a threat to the bee-king inside, may be a personification of parliament in its role as guardian of the commonweal. As such, the beekeeper stands at the opposite pole to Ghengis Khan, but both are essential to the health of the realm.[1094] The role of parliament as guardian offers the escape route from the poem's apparently crippling impasse: it is the unique forum for legitimate criticism and the ultimate conduit of advice. Of course, coming after *Richard*'s excoriating portrayal of the parliaments of the previous reign, this position might seem hopelessly compromised. Indeed, at any time before the winter of 1409 it would have been difficult for anyone with the reformist instincts of the *Mum* poet to have thought otherwise.

The previous parliament, held in 1407 in Gloucester, saw important procedural concessions made to the Commons in its struggles with the Council which was effectively ruling in the stead of the debilitated king, but the Council, with Arundel at its head as chancellor, was still firmly in control, and so there could have been no hope of more thorough-going reform.[1095] Two years later, however, the situation may have seemed very different. The issues of clerical disendowment and the lessening of religious repression were being discussed by members of the parliamentary class. Opposition to Henry IV's Council and Arundel was mounting under the leadership of Prince Henry. In October 1409 a decision was taken to hold a parliament in Bristol the following January, but between the 2nd and 18th of December the venue was changed to Westminster. Henry IV's ill health may have influenced the decision, but it was probably also a reflection of the ascendancy of the Prince's faction, since they calculated that they could more easily control events in Westminster. On 21 December 1409 Arundel resigned as chancellor, another sign of the Prince's influence. What the *Mum* poet made of these events is difficult to decide. Would he have seen in the initial announcement of Bristol as the parliamentary venue an opportunity for him to support calls for reform? Would he in turn have seen its removal to London as yet another example of Henry's resistance to counsel: the Sothsegger once again barred from the corridors of power? Alternatively, the change of venue, seen as signifying Arundel's eclipse, could have given him grounds for optimism. Arundel's departure might have raised hopes that the repressive nexus of church and state that he embodied was about to be dissolved. There may even have been those who saw the Prince as sympathetic to religious reform. In the event, any such hopes were to be cruelly dashed. The January 1410 Parliament saw unprecedented Commons motions for clerical disendowment and for the relaxation of measures against Lollardy, but both of these were crushed. Meanwhile, the clerical Convocation, sitting in tandem with Parliament, condemned

[1093] D. Biggs, "An Ill and Infirm King: Henry IV, Health, and the Gloucester Parliament of 1407", in *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413,* ed. G. Dodd and D. Biggs (York UP, 2008), 180-209.
[1094] Giancarlo, *Parliament and Literature*, 249-52.
[1095] Biggs, "An Ill and Infirm King", 198-9.

John Badby, an Evesham Lollard with Bristol connections. He was burned the next month.[1096]

Assuming that *Mum* was completed after March 1409, when the friars were granted exemption from Arundel's Constitutions, it is tempting to place its composition, or at least completion, in the heady days between October 1409 and January 1410. Had it been written after the 1410 Parliament there would surely have been some direct reference to its sorry outcome.[1097] In this period, perhaps for the first time since the 1380s, it may have looked to the poet as though the Commons could implement fundamental change for the better, but this could only come about if MPs behaved more responsibly and more courageously than he judged they had in the intervening decades. Perhaps, after the failure of *Richard* as an advice text offered by a subject to his king or his Council, the poet saw *Mum* as a work of advice and encouragement to be presented, not to a king, but to sympathetic members of the Commons. As such, he would have been able to resolve the apparent contradiction in his work between the denial of legitimacy to criticism of royal government and the very existence of the text itself. Seen as part of the process of legitimate parliamentary comment and advice, *Mum* could be seen as the manifestation of a loyal subject's duty towards the commonweal.[1098]

[1096] P. McNiven, *Heresy and Politics in the Reign of Henry IV: The Burning of John Badby* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1987), 156-7, 185, 189-219; *PROME*, parliament of 1410, Introduction.

[1097] Although it is possible that the allusion to burning (169) relates to Badby's punishment, and the criticisms of MPs who remain silent for fear of the consequences (1118-40) may be, at least in part, a reference to the 1410 Parliament. Barr, however, suggests Sawtre's burning in 1401 and the period 1399 to 1408 as likely referents for these passages: *Tradition*, 300, 340-1.

[1098] The Council's concession in the 1407 Parliament that the Commons could discuss the condition of the realm in the absence of the king or Lords may have encouraged a sense that debate within the parliamentary class was sanctioned at the highest level: Biggs, "An Ill and Infirm King", 198. Did the *Richard* and *Mum* poet write any more works? Lawton's comments in his "Lollardy and the 'Piers Plowman' Tradition", 785-7, suggests that *Piers the Ploughman's Creed* might be a candidate.

Primary Sources and Bibliography

Unpublished Primary Sources

Berkeley Castle Muniments
SR 97-8 (Abbot Newland's Roll)

Bristol Central Library
10164 (Samuel Seyer, Bristol Annals)
9075 (Martin Annal)

Bristol Record Office
00859 (Miscellaneous Deeds)
04719 (Great Red Book of Bristol)
40365 (St Leonard's Vestry)
5139 (Manuscripts originally kept by Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery and by Bristol Reference Library)
8016 (Grateley Manor, and properties in Bristol)
08154 (Town Clerk's Purchases: Tolzey Court Books, 1489 – 1497)
13748/4 (William Adams, Bristol Chronicle, 1625)
26166 (Deeds and documents relating to properties belonging to Christchurch)
5163 (Gifts: Transferred from City Museum: Braikenridge deeds)
AC/M (Records of Manors and Hundreds)
JOr/1/1 (Great Orphan Book)
P.AS/D/LM/N/7; P.AS/D/BS/B (Parish of All Saints MSS)
P/StE/ChW (Parish of Saint Ewen MSS)
P.St J/D/1/10 (Parish of St James MSS)
P/ST.JB/ChW (parish of St John the Baptist MSS)
P. ST MR/5163 (Parish of St Mary Redcliffe MSS)
P.St S/D/11/1-2 (Parish of St Stephens MSS)
P.St T/D/3 (Parish of St Thomas MSS

British Library
Additional Charters
Additional MSS
Cotton MSS
Egerton MSS
Egerton Rolls
Harleian MSS

Gloucestershire Archives
D471/Z5 (Abbot Newland's Roll)
D421/T4 /4 (Lydney Park Estate MSS)
GBR/B/2/1 (Great Red Book)

Somerset Archive and Record Service
T\PH\pls/1/16 (Receipt from the feodary of the Earl's Court)

The National Archives (Public Record Office), Kew
Chancery:
C1 (Early Chancery Proceedings)
C61 (Gascon Rolls)
C67 (Pardon Rolls)
C81 (Warrants for the Great Seal)
C88 (Writs Certiorari)
C131 (Extents for Debts)
C 135 (Inquisitions Post Mortem, Series I, Edward III)
C 143 (Inquisitions Ad Quod Damnum)
C146 (Ancient Deeds, Series C
C241 (Certificates of Statute Merchant and Statute Staple)
CP40 (Common Plea Rolls)
Exchequer:
E13 (Exchequer of Pleas: Plea Rolls)
E 101 (King's Remembrancer: Accounts Various)
E122 (King's Remembrancer: Particulars of Customs Accounts
E 159 (King's Remembrancer: Memoranda Rolls)
E 163 (King's Remembrancer: Miscellanea)
E179 (King's Remembrancer: Particulars of Account)
E326 (Augmentation Office: Ancient Deeds, Series B)
E328 (Augmentation Office: Ancient Deeds, Series BB)
E368 (Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer: Memoranda Rolls)
E 401 (Exchequer of Receipt: Receipt Rolls)
Justices:
JUST 1 (Justices in Eyre, of Assize, of Oyer and Terminer, and of the Peace, etc: Rolls and Files)
JUST 3 (Justices of Gaol Delivery: Gaol Delivery Rolls and Files)
Court of King's Bench:
KB9 (Crown Side: Indictments, Oyer and Terminer Files, etc)
KB27 (Plea and Crown Sides: Coram Rege Rolls)
KB29 (Crown Side: Controlment Rolls)
Prerogative Court of Canterbury:
PROB/11 (Will Registers)
Special Collections:
SC6 (Ministers' and Receivers' Accounts)
SC 8 (Ancient Petitions)
State Papers Domestic:
SP46 (Supplementary)
Court of Star Chamber:
STAC 5 (Proceedings, Elizabeth I)

Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office
Radnor MSS 490 (Hungerford Papers)

Printed Primary Sources

Accounts of the Constables of Bristol Castle in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries, ed. Margaret Sharp, BRS, 34 (1982)
"The Accounts of John Balsall, Purser of the Trinity of Bristol 1480-1", ed. Thomas F. Reddaway & Alwyn A. Ruddock, *Camden Miscellany*, 23 (Camden Soc., 4th ser., 7, London, 1969), 1-28
Adams's Chronicle of Bristol ed. Francis F. Fox and E. Salisbury (Bristol, 1910)
The Alien Communities of London in the Fifteenth Century: The Subsidy Rolls of 1440 and 1483-4, ed. James L. Bolton (Stamford: Paul Watkins for the Richard III & Yorkist History Trust, 1998)
"Annales de Dunstaplia", in *Annales Monastici*, vol. III, ed. H. R. Luard (London: RS, 1866)
Annales Islandici posteriorum saeculorum: Annálar, 1400-1800, Þriðja bindi (Reykjavík, 1933-38)
Berkeley Castle Muniments, ed. Bridget Wells-Furby, BGAS, 17-18 (2004)
The Book of Margery Kempe, ed. B. A. Windeatt (London: Penguin, 1985)
The Book of Remembrance of Southampton, Volume I, 1440-1620, ed. H. W. Gidden, Southampton Record Society (Southampton, 1927)
Borough Customs, ed. Mary Bateson, Selden Soc., 18, 21 (1904, 1906)
Bridgwater Borough Archives, Volume V: 1468-1485, ed. Robert W. Dunning, T.D. Tremlett and T.B. Dilks, Somerset Record Society, 70 (1971)
Bristol Charters, 1155-1373, ed. N.D. Harding, Bristol Record Society, 1 (1930)
Bristol Charters, 1378-1499, ed. H.A. Cronne, Bristol Record Society, 11 (1946 for 1945)
The Bristol and Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy of 1523-1527, ed. M. A. Faraday, *BGAS*, 23 (2009)
"Bristol Record Office" (www.bristol.gov.uk/page/leisure-and-culture/bristol-record-office-what-we-do [accessed 21/03/13])
Bristol's Trade with Ireland and the Continent, 1503-1601, ed. Susan Flavin & Evan T. Jones, BRS, 61 (2009)
The Brokage Books of Southampton, Southampton Record Society/Records Series: 1439-40, ed. B. D. M. Bunyard (1941); 1443-44, ed. Olive Coleman, vol. I (1960), vol. II (1961); 1447-48, ed. Winifred A. Harwood (2008); 1448-49, ed. Elisabeth A, Lewis (1993); 1477-78, ed. K. F. Stevens & T. E. Olding (1985)
The Cabot Voyages and Bristol Discovery under Henry VII, ed. J. A. Williamson , Hakluyt Soc., 2nd ser., 120 (CUP, 1962)
The Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book 1532-1565: Part 1 1532-1542, ed. D. Hollis, BRS, 14 (1949)
Calendar of Charter Rolls ... 1226-1516, Public Record Office, 6 vols. (London, 1903-27)
Calendar of the Charters etc of the City and County of Bristol, ed. John Latimer (Bristol Corporation, 1909)
Calendar of the Close Rolls ... 1271-1509, Public Record Office, 47 vols. (London, 1892-1963)
Calendar of the Fine Rolls ... 1272-1509, Public Record Office, 22 vols. (London, 1911-1971)
Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and Other Analogous Documents Preserved in the Public Records Office XXI: 6-10 Henry V (1418-1422) ed. J. L. Kirby and Janet Stevenson (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2002)
Calendar of the Letter Books of the City of London: Letter Book F, ed. R. R. Sharpe (London: privately printed, 1904)

Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the P.R.O. (1232-1509), Public Record Office, 52 vols. (London, 1891-1916)
A Catalogue of the Medieval Muniments at Berkeley Castle, ed. Bridget Wells-Furby, 2 vols., BGAS (Bristol, 2004)
Camden, William, *Britannia sive florentissimorum regnorum Angliae, Scotiae, Hiberniae et insularum adjacentium* (London, 1586)
The Cartulary of St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol, ed. David Walker, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, Gloucestershire Record Series, 10 (Bristol, 1998)
The Cartulary of St Mark's Hospital, Bristol, ed. Charles Ross, BRS, 21 (1959)
The Cely Letters, 1472-1488, ed. A. Hanham, Early English Text Society, Original Ser., 273 (OUP, 1975)
"Chantry Certificates, Gloucestershire", ed. J. Maclean, *TBGAS*, 8 (1883-4), 229-308
"The Childe of Bristow, a Poem by John Lydgate", ed. Clarence Hoper, *Camden Miscellany*, 4, Camden Soc., Old Ser., vol. 73 (1859), 3-28
The Church Book of St Ewen's, Bristol, 1454-1584, ed. Betty R. Masters and Elizabeth Ralph, BGAS, 6 (1967)
The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham (1376-1422), trans. David Preest, ed. James G. Clark, trans. David Preest (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005)
The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377-1422, ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997)
A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of Edward IV (1461-74), ed. J.O. Halliwell, Camden Soc., Old Series, 10 (1839)
Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400: The Reign of Richard II ed. Chris Given-Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993)
Chronicum Saxonicum ex MSS codicibus nunc primum integrum editit ac Latinum fecit, ed. Edmund Gibson (Oxford, 1692)
"Chronicon Thomae Wykes", in *Annales Monastici*, vol. IV, ed. H. R. Luard (London: RS, 1869)
The Church Book of St Ewen's, Bristol, 1454-1584, ed. Betty R. Masters and Elizabeth Ralph, BGAS, 6 (1967)
Clifton Antiquarian Club (www.cliftonantiquarian.co.uk/ [accessed 21/03/13])
The Coventry Leet Book, or Mayor's Register, Containing the Records of the City Court Leet or View of Frankpledge, A.D. 1420-1555, ed. Mary Dormer Harris, Early English Text Society, 146 (1913)
Court of Common Pleas: The National Archives, CP40: 1399-1500, ed. Jonathan Mackman & Matthew Stephens (http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=119286, 2010)
Diplomatarium Islandicum Íslenzkt fornbréfasafn, sem hefir inni að halda bréf og gjörninga,dóma og máldaga og aðrar skrár, er snerta Ísland eða íslenzka menn, *1415–1589*, ed.Björn Þorsteinsson, (Reykjavík 1952–1972)
An English Chronicle, 1377-1461: A New Edition, ed. William Marx (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003)
An English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI, ed. J.S. Davies, Camden Society, 64 (1856)
English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century, ed. C. L. Kingsford (OUP, 1913)
Gale, Thomas, *Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores Quinque* (Oxford: Sheldon, 1687)

Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain: an Edition and Translation of De gestis Britonum [Historia Regum Britanniae], ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007)
The Great Red Book of Bristol, ed. E.W.W. Veale, Parts 2-4, Bristol Record Society 4, 8, 16, 18 (1931-53)
Handbook and Select Calendar of Sources for Medieval Ireland in the National Archives in the United Kingdom, ed. Paul Dryburgh and Brendan Smith (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005)
Heath, George *The New Bristol Guide* (Bristol: 1799)
*The "*Historia Brittonum*", Edited in the 10th Century by Mark the Hermit*, ed. W. Gunn (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1819)
Historical Manuscripts Commission, 12th Report, Appendix Part IV: MSS of the Duke of Rutland, vol. 1 (London, 1888)
Historical Poems of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, ed. R. H. Robbins (New York: Columbia UP, 1959)
Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton, 1270-1600, ed. Alwyn A. Ruddock, Southampton Record Series (Southampton, 1951)
Historie of the Arrival of Edward IV in England and the Final Recouerye of his Kingdomes from Henry VI, ed. J. Bruce, Camden Society, 1 (1838)
The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535-1543, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith (London: G. Bell, 1908)
Itineraries of William Worcestre, ed. J. H. Harvey (OUP, Oxford Medieval Texts, 1969)
Jacobean Pilgrims from England to St James of Compostela, from the Early Twelfth to the Late Fifteenth Century, ed. Constance Mary Storrs (Santiago de Compostela: Xacobeo Galicia/Xunta de Galicia, 1994)
Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii de rebus Britannicis collectanea, ed. T. Hearne (1770 edn., London)
"John Latimer", *TBGAS*, 26 (1903), 207-12
Journal de Jean de Roye, connu sous le nom de chronique scandaleuse, 1460-1483, ed. B. de Mandrot (Paris: Société de l'histoire de France, 1894)
Kirkstall Abbey Chronicles, ed. John Taylor, Thoresby Soc., 42 (Leeds, 1952)
Latimer, John, *Calendar of the Charters etc of the City and County of Bristol* (Bristol, W. C. Hemmons, 1909)
Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Wars of the English in France during the Reign of Henry VI, ed. J. Stevenson (RS, 1864)
Lewis, John, *A Complete History of the Several Translations of the Holy Bible, and New Testament, into English, Both in MS. and in Print; and of the Most Remarkable Editions of them since the Invention of Printing* (1st edn 1731, second edition, 1739)
Liber Luciani: De laude Cestrie, ed. M. V. Taylor, Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, 64 (1912)
Liber Luciani: De laude Cestrie, ed. Mark Faulkner,
http://www.medievalchester.ac.uk/texts/reading/Lucian.html
The Little Red Book of Bristol, ed. F. B. Bickley, 2 vols. (Bristol: W. C. Hemmons, 1900)
*The Lives of the Ninth-Century Popes (*Liber pontificalis*)*, ed. Raymond Davis (Liverpool UP, 1995)
The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, by Robert Ricart, Town Clerk of Bristol 18 Edward IV, ed. L. Toulmin-Smith, Camden Society, New Series, 5 (1872)

The Marcher Lordships of South Wales, 1415-1536: Select Documents, ed. R. B. Pugh (Wales UP, Cardiff, 1963)
Matthews, William, *The New History, Survey and Description of the City and Suburbs of Bristol, or Complete Guide* (Bristol: W. Mathews, 1794),
Memoir of the Life and Times of John Carpenter, Town Clerk of London in the Reign of Henry V and Henry VI, and Founder of the City of London School, ed.T. Brewer (London: Arthur Taylor, 1856)
Minutes of Parliament of the Middle Temple, 1501-1703, ed. C. T. Martin, 3 vols. (London: Butterworth & co, 1904-5)
Mum and the Sothsegger, ed. M. Day and R. Steele, Early English Text Society, old series, 199 (Oxford, 1936)
The Municipal Records of Bath, 1189 to 1604, ed. A. J. King and B. H. Watts (London, n.d.)
Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis: Liber Albus, Liber Custumarum et Liber Horn, pt. 2, ed. H. T. Riley (RS, London, 1860)
Nennius's "History of the Britons", ed. A. W. Wade-Evans (London: Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1938)
Nennius, British History and the Welsh Annals, ed. and trans. John Morris (London and Chichester: Phillimore, 1980)
Notes or Abstracts of the Wills Contained in the Volume Entitled the Great Orphan Book and Book of Wills, in the Council House at Bristol (1381-1605), ed. T. P.Wadley, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (Bristol, 1886)
The Oath Book, or Red Parchment Book of Colchester, ed. W. Gurney Benham (Colchester: Essex County Standard, 1907)
The Ordinances of Bristol, 1506-98, ed. Maureen Stanford, BRS, 41 (1990)
The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages, ed. E. M. Carus-Wilson, BRS, 7 (1937)
The Overseas Trade of London: Exchequer Customs Accounts, 1480-1, ed. H. S. Cobb, London Record Society, 27 (1990)
The Paston Letters, ed. J. Gairdner (London, 1904)
Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century, ed. N. Davis, R. Beadle, C. Richmond, Early English Text Society, Supplementary Ser., 20-22 (OUP, 2004-5)
Pedes Finium, Commonly Called Feet of Fines, for Somerset, Henry IV - Henry VI ed. Emanuel Green, Somerset Record Society, 22 (1906)
The Piers Plowman Tradition: A Critical Edition of Pierce the Plowman's Creed, Richard the Redeless, Mum and the Sothsegger and The Crowned King, ed. H. Barr (London: J. M. Dent, 1993)
The Plumpton Correspondence: A Series of Letters, Chiefly Domestic, Written in the Reigns of Edward IV, Richard III, Henry VII and Henry VIII, ed. Thomas Stapleton, Camden Soc., Old Ser., 4 (1839)
The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints', Bristol: Part 1, ed. Clive Burgess, BRS, 46 (1995)
The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol [Part 2]: The Churchwardens' Accounts, ed. Clive Burgess, BRS, 53 (2000)
The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints' Church, Bristol [Part 3]: Wills, the Halleway Chantry Records and Deeds, ed. Clive Burgess, BRS, 56 (2004)
Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council, ed. N. H. Nicolas (Record Commission, 1837)
Pryce, George, *A Popular History of Bristol: Antiquarian, Topographical and Descriptive from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (Bristol: W. Mack, 1861)

Records of Early English Drama: Bristol, ed. Mark C. Pilkinton (Toronto and London: Toronto UP, 1997)
The Red Paper Book of Colchester, ed. W. Gurney Benham (Colchester: Essex County Standard, 1902)
Register of Admissions to the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, ed. H.A.C. Sturgess (London, Butterworth & co, 1949)
The Register of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, St Mary, St John the Baptist and St Katherine of Coventry, ed. Mary Dormer Harris, Dugdale Society, 13 (1935)
The Register of Nicholas Bubwith, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1407-1424, ed. T. S. Holmes, Somerset Records Society, 29-30 (1914),
Reid, W. N. and W. E. Hicks, *Leading Events in the History of the Port of Bristol* (Bristol: W. C. Hemmons, 1877)
Richard the Redeless and Mum and the Sothsegger, ed. J. M. Dean (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan UP, 2000)
Robert Sturmy's Commercial Expedition to the Mediterranean (1457/8), ed. Stuart Jenks, BRS, vol. 58 (2006)
Sealy, Thomas Henry, "The Twin Giants", *Bentley's Miscellany* (1843), 266-540
Sealy, Thomas Henry, and anon., *Bristol Fast and Pleasant* (Bristol: Garroway, n.d.)
Select Cases in the Star Chamber, ed. I. S. Leadam, Selden Society, 2 (1910)
Shiercliff, Edward, *The Bristol and Hotwell Guide* (Bristol: 1789)
Six Town Chronicles, ed. R. Flenley (OUP, 1911)
John Smyth, *The Berkeley Manuscripts: The Lives of the Berkeleys, Lords of the Honour, Castle and Manor of Berkeley, in the County of Gloucester, from 1066 to 1618; with a Description of the Hundred of Berkeley and of its Inhabitants,* ed. J. Maclean, 3 vols. (Bristol:Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1883-5)
Some Manorial Accounts of St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol, ed. Arthur Sabine, BRS, 22 (1960)
The Staple Court Books of Bristol, ed. E. E. Rich, BRS, 5 (1934)
The Stonor Letters and Papers, 1290-1483, ed. C. L. Kingsford, 2 vols., Camden Soc., 3rd Ser., 29-30 (1919)
"The Stores of the Cities", ed. Rigg, A. G., *Anglia*, 85 (1967), 127-37
Stow, John, *A Survey of London. Reprinted from the Text of 1603*, ed. Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908-27), also available at http://www.british-history.ac.uk/source.aspx?pubid=593&page=1&sort=1 (accessed 20/04/13)
Thomas Norton's Ordinal of Alchemy, ed. J. Reidy, Early English Text Society, original series, 272 (1975)
Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles, ed. J. Gairdner, Camden Society, new series, 28 (1880)
The Topography of Medieval and Early Modern Bristol, Part I: Property Holdings in the Early Walled Town and Marsh Suburb North of the Avon, ed. Roger Leech, BRS, 48 (1997)
"Two Bristol Calendars", ed. A. E. Hudd, *TBGAS*, 19 (1894-5), 105-41
Two Compotus Rolls of St Augustine's Abbey, Bristol, for 1491-2 and 1511-12, ed. G. Beachcroft and Arthur Sabine, BRS, 9 (1938)
The Views of the Hosts of Alien Merchants 1440-1444, ed. Helen Bradley, London Record Society, 46 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012)
Waurin, J., *Recueil des croniques et anchiennes istories de la Grant Bretaigne*, vol. 5, ed. W. Hardy and E.L.C.P. Hardy, (London: RS, 1891)

William Worcestre: The Topography of Medieval Bristol, ed. F. Neale, Bristol Record Society, 51 (2000)
Wiltshire Extents for Debts, Edward I-Elizabeth I, ed. Angela Conyers,Wiltshire Record Society, 28 (1972)
York House Books, 1461-1490, ed. Lorraine C. Attreed, 2 vols. (Stroud: Alan Sutton for Richard III and York History Trust, 1991)

Secondary Works

Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200-1400, ed. Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski (London: Royal Academy of Arts/Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987)
Amor, Nicholas R., *Late Medieval Ipswich: Trade and Industry* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011)
Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991)
Arthurson, Ian, *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy, 1491-1499* (1997 edn., Thrupp: Sutton,)
Attreed, Lorraine, *The King's Towns: Identity and Survival in Late Medieval English Boroughs* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2001)
Baker, Nigel and Richard Holt, *Urban Growth and the Medieval Church: Gloucester and Worcester* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004)
Barr, Helen, "The Relationship of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger", Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 4 (1990), 105-33
Barr, Helen, "The Dates of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger", Notes and Queries,* 235 (September, 1990), 270-75
Barr, Helen, *Signes and Soth: Language in the Piers Plowman Tradition* (CUP, 1994)
Barr, Helen, *Socioliterary Practice in Late Medieval England* (OUP, 2001)
Barron, Caroline M., "Ralph Holland and the London Radicals, 1438-1444", in *A History of the North London Branch of the Historical Association, together with Essays in Honour of its Golden Jubilee* (London, 1970), reprinted in *The Medieval Town*, ed. Holt and Rosser, 160-83
Barron, Caroline M., "Richard II's Quarrel with London", in *The Reign of Richard II*, ed. F. R. H. DuBoulay & C. M. Barron (London: Athlone Press, 1971), 173-201
Barron, Caroline M., "London and the Crown, 1451-61", in *The Crown and Local Communities in England and France in the Fifteenth Century* ed. J. R. L. Highfield & R. Jeffs (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1981), 88-109
Barron, Caroline M., "London, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 395-440
Barron, Caroline M., "Chivalry, Pageantry and Merchant Culture in Medieval London", in *Heraldry, Pageantry, and Social Display in Medieval England*, eds. Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), 219-41
Barron, Caroline M., *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People, 1200-1500* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004).
Barron, Caroline M., "The Political Culture of Medieval London", in *Political Culture in Late Medieval England,* ed. Linda Clark and Christine Carpenter (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 111-34
Barton, K. J., "Excavations at Back Hall, Bristol, 1958", *TBGAS*, 79 (1960), 251-86
Bennett, Michael, *Richard II and the Revolution of 1399* (Stroud: Sutton, 1999)
Bennett, Michael, "Henry of Bolingbrooke and the Revolution of 1399", in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (Woodbridge: Boydell/York Medieval Press, 2003), 9-34

Britnell, Richard, *Colchester in the Early Fifteenth Century: A Portrait* (Durham: University of Durham, 1988)
Bachelard, Gaston, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994)
Beardward, Alice, *Alien Merchants in England, 1350 to 1377: Their Legal and Economic Position* (Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy of America, 1931)
Bedell, John, "Memory and Proof of Age in England, 1272-13", *Past and Present*, 162 (1999), 3-27
Bennett, Michael J., "Henry VII and the Northern Rising of 1489", *EHR*, 105 (1990), 34-59
Bernard, J., *Navires et gens de mer a Bordeaux (vers 1400-1550)*, 3 vols. (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1968)
Bettey, Joseph H., *Bristol Observed: Visitors' Impressions of the City from Domesday to the Blitz* (Bristol: Redcliffe, 1986)
Bettey, Joseph H., "St Augustine's Abbey", in *Bristol Cathedral: History and Architecture*, ed. John Rogan (Tempus, Stroud, 2000), 15-37
Bettey, Joseph H., *The Medieval Friaries, Hospitals and Chapelries of Bristol*, Avon Local History and Archaeology Books, 1 (2009)
Bettey, Joseph H., *The First Historians of Bristol: William Barrett and Samuel Seyer* (BHA, 108, 2003)
Bettey, Joseph H., *Morning Stars of the Reformation: Early Religious Reformers in the Bristol Region*, ALHA Books, no. 8 (Bristol: Avon Local History and Archaeology, 2011)
Bettey, Joseph H., "Newland , John (d. 1515)", *ODNB*,
(http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20013 [accessed 2/12/2012])
Bevan, Bernard, *A History of Spanish Architecture* (London: Batsford, 1938)
Biggs, Douglas, *Three Armies in Britain: The Irish Campaign of Richard II and the Usurpation of Henry IV, 1397-99* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2006)
Biggs, Douglas, "An Ill and Infirm King: Henry IV, Health, and the Gloucester Parliament of 1407", in *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413*, ed. G. Dodd and D. Biggs (York UP, 2008), 180-209
Bochaca, Michel, "Les 'gens de mer' dans les villes portuaires de la France atlantique à la fin du Moyen Âge: l'exemple de Bayonne, Bordeaux et Libourne », in *Gentes de mar en la ciudad atlántica medieval*, ed. Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Michel Bochaca & Amélia Aguiar Andrade (Institutio de Estudios Riojanos, Logroño, 2012), 45-62
Bolton, J. L., *The Medieval English Economy, 1150-1500* (London: Dent, 1980)
Bolton J. L., "The City and the Crown, 1456-61", *London Journal*, 12 (1986), 11-24
Bolton, J. L., "Irish Migration to England in the Late Middle Ages: The Evidence of 1394 and 1440", *Irish Historical Studies*, 32 (2000), 1-21
Bonahue Edward T., Jnr., "Stow's Survey of London", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 38:1 (1998), 61-85
Boore, Eric J., *Excavations at Tower Lane, Bristol* (Bristol: City of Bristol and Art Gallery/Bristol Threatened History Soc., 1984)
Boroughs of Medieval Wales, ed. R. A. Griffiths (Cardiff : Wales UP, 1978)
Boucher, C. E., "The Lond or Loud Brass in St Peter's Church, Bristol", *TBGAS*, 30 (1907), 265-9
Boucher, E., "St Edith's Well and St Peter's Cross", *TBGAS*, 61 (1939), 95-106
Bowers, J. M., "*Piers Plowman* and the Police: Notes towards a History of the Wycliffite Langland", *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 6 (1992), 1-50
Bowers, J. M., "Piers Plowman's William Langland: Editing the Text, Writing the Author's Life", *Year Book of Langland Studies*, 9 (1995), 65-92

Bridbury, A. R., *Medieval English Clothmaking: An Economic Survey* (London: Heinemann, 1982)
Britnell, Richard H., "The Economy of British Towns, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 313-33
Britnell, Richard H., *Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300-1525* (CUP, 1986)
Brown, A. L. "The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV", *EHR,* 79 (1964), 1-30
Brown, R. A., H. M. Colvin and A. J. Taylor, *The History of the King's Works*, vol. 2 (London: HMSO, 1963)
Brown, Wendy, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 2010)
Byrne, Eugene and Simon Gurr, *The Bristol Story: A Graphic and (Mostly) True History of the Greatest City in the World!* (Bristol: Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, 2008)
Burden, J., "How do you Bury a Deposed King? The Funeral of Richard II and the Establishment of Lancastrian Royal Authority in 1400", in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime*, ed. G. Dodd and D. Biggs (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 35-54
Burgess, Clive, "'For the Increase of Divine Service': Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36:1 (1985), 46-65
Burgess, Clive, "A Service for the Dead: The Form and Function of the Anniversary in Late Medieval Bristol", *TBGAS*, 105 (1987), 183-211
Burgess, Clive, "'By Quick and by Dead': Wills and Pious Provision in Late Medieval Bristol", *EHR*, 305 (1987), 837-58
Burgess, Clive, "Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered", in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. Michael A. Hicks (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1990), 14-33
Burgess, Clive, "Strategies for Eternity: Perpetual Chantry Foundations in Late Medieval Bristol", in *Religious Belief and Ecclesiastical Careers in Late Medieval England*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), 1-32
Burgess, Clive, *The Parish Church and the Laity in Late Medieval Bristol*, BBHA, 80 (1992)
Burgess, Clive, "'Longing to be Prayed for': Death and Commemoration in an English Parish in the Later Middle Ages", in *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (CUP, 2000), 44-65
Burgess, Clive and Andrew Wathey, "Mapping the Soundscape: Church Music in English Towns, 1450-1550", *Early Music History*, 19 (2000), 1-46
Burgess, Clive, "Pre-Reformation Churchwardens' Accounts and Parish Government: Lessons from London and Bristol", *EHR*, 117 (2002), 307-32
Burgess, Clive, "A Hotbed of Heresy? Fifteenth-Century Bristol and Lollardy Reconsidered", in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion* ed. L. Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 43-62
Burgess, Clive, "A Repertory for Reinforcement: Configuring Civic Catholicism in Fifteenth-Century Bristol", in *Of Mice and Men: Image, Belief and Regulation in Late Medieval England,* ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 85-108
Burgess, Clive, "'An Afterlife in Memory': Commemoration and its Effects in a Late Medieval Parish", *Studies in Church History*, 45 (2009), 196-217
Burgess, Clive, "Chantries in the Parish, or 'Through the Looking-Glass'", *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 164 (2011), 100-29
Burgess, Clive, "Canynges, William (1402–1474)", *ODNB*
[http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4581, accessed 24/10/12];
Burgess, Clive, "Ricart, Robert (fl. 1478)", *ODNB*
(http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23473 [accessed 26 Aug 2012])

Burrow, J. A., "The Audience of *Piers Plowman*", *Anglia,* 75 (1957), 373-84
Bush, Henry, *Bristol Town Duties: A Collection of Original and Interesting Documents [etc.]* (Bristol, 1828)
Calkin, Siobhain Bly, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript* (London: Routledge, 2005)
Calzada, Andrés, *Historia de la arquitectura Española* (2nd edn, Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1949)
Carus-Wilson, E. M., *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (London: Methuen, 1954)
Carus-Wilson, E. M., "Evidence of Industrial Growth on Some Fifteenth-Century Manors', *EcHR*, new ser. 12:2 (1959), 190-205
Carus-Wilson, E. M., "The Woollen Industry before 1550", in *The Victoria History of the County of Wiltshire*, vol. 4, ed. Elizabeth Crittall, (OUP/Institute of Historical Research, London, 1959), 115-47
Carus-Wilson, E. M. and Olive Coleman, *England's Export Trade, 1275-1547* (OUP, 1963)
Carus-Wilson, E. M., "An Industrial Revolution of the Thirteenth Century", in her *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, (2nd edn., London: Methuen, 1967), 183-210
Carus-Wilson, E. M., "Trends in the Export of English Woollens in the Fourteenth Century", in her *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (2nd edn., London: Methuen, 1967), 239-64
Carus-Wilson, E. M., "The Aulnage Accounts: A Criticism", in her *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (2nd edn., London: Methuen, 1967), 279-91
Carus Wilson, E. M., "The Iceland Trade", in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. E. Power & M. Postan (London: Routledge, 1933), 155-82
Carus Wilson, E. M., "The English Cloth Industry in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries", in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. E. Power & M. Postan (London: Routledge, 1933), 211-38
Casey, Edward *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (California UP, 1997)
Childs, Wendy R., *Anglo-Castilian Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester: MUP, 1978)
Childs, Wendy and Timothy O'Neill, "Overseas Trade", in *A New History of Ireland: II Medieval Ireland, 1169-1534*, ed. Art Cosgrove (2nd edn., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 492-524
Childs, Wendy R, "England's Iceland Trade in the Fifteenth Century: the Role of the Port of Hull", in *Northern Seas Yearbook, 1995,* ed. Poul Holm, Olaf Uwe Janzen & Jón Th. Thór (Esbjerg, Denmark: Fiskeri og sofartsmuseets, 1995), 11-31
Childs, Wendy R., "Irish Merchants and Seamen in Late Medieval England", *Irish Historical Studies*, 32 (2000), 22-43
Childs, "Commercial Relations between the Basque Provinces and England in the Later Middle Ages, c. 1200-c.1500", *Itsas Memoria*, 4 (2003), 58-63
Certeau, Michelle de, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. S. Rendall (Berkeley: California UP, 1984)
Clanchy, Michael T., *From Memory to Written Record*, (2nd edn., Oxford: Blackwell, 1993)
Clark, James G, "St Augustine's in the Later Middle Ages", in *Medieval Art, Architecture and History of Bristol Cathedral*, ed. Jon Cannon and Beth Williamson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 247-62
Clarke, Catherine A. M., *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England, 700-1400* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006)

Clarke, Catherine A. M. (ed.), *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester, c.1200-1600* (Wales UP, 2011)
Clarke, Catherine A. M., "Introduction: Medieval Chester: Views from the Walls", in *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester c. 1200-1600*, ed. eadem (Wales UP, 2011), 1-18
Clarke, Catherine A. M., "Remembering Anglo-Saxon Mercia in Late Medieval and Early Modern Chester", in *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester, c.1200-1600*, ed. eadem (Wales UP, 2011), 201-18
Clarke, Helen, Sarah Pearson, Mavis Mate and Keith Parfitt, *Sandwich: The "Completest Medieval Town in England"* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010)
Coates, Richard and Jennifer Scherr, "Some Local Place-Names in Medieval and Early-Modern Bristol", *TBGAS*, vol. 129 (2011), 155-96
Cobb, P. G., "The Corpus Christi Procession in Bristol", in *Historic churches and church life in Bristol : Essays in Memory of Elizabeth Ralph 1911-2000*, ed. Joseph H. Bettey (Gloucester: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2001), 85-97
Cohen, Meredith, "Metropolitan Architecture, Demographics, and the Urban Identity of Paris in the Thirteenth Century", in *Cities, Texts and Social Networks, 400-1500: Experiences and Perceptions of Urban Space*, ed. Caroline Goodson, Anne E. Lester & Carol Symes (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 65-100
Cohn, Samuel K., Jnr., *Popular Protest in Late Medieval English Towns* (CUP, 2013)
Coleman, Janet, *English Literature in History, 1350-1400: Medieval Readers and Writers* (London, 1981)
Coleman, Olive, "The Collectors of Customs in London under Richard II", in *Studies in London History Presented to Philip Edmund Jones*, ed. A. E. J. Hollaender and W. Kellaway (London: Hodder, 1969), 181-93
Connell-Smith, G., *Forerunners of Drake: A Study of English Trade with Spain in the Early Tudor Period* (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1954)
Cordery, Leona F., "The Saracens in Middle English Literature: A Definition of Otherness", *Al-Masaq*, 14 (2002), 87 – 99
Art Cosgrove, "The Emergence of the Pale, 1399-1447", in *A New History of Ireland: II Medieval Ireland, 1169-1534*, ed. Art Cosgrove (2nd edn., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 533-56
Coverley, Merlin, *Psychogeography* (Harpenden: Pocket Essentials, 2006)
Cresswell, Tim, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004)
Cubitt, Geoffrey, *History and Memory* (Manchester UP, 2007)
Carruthers, Mary, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (CUP, 1992)
Dalton, Heather, "Negotiating Fortune: English Merchants in Early Sixteenth-Century Seville", in *Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World: People, Products, and Practices on the Move*, ed. A. Williams (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2009), 57-73
Dalton, Heather, "'Into speyne to selle for slavys': English, Spanish and Genoese Merchant Networks and their Involvement with the 'Cost of Gwynea' Trade prior to 1550", in *Brokers Of Change: Atlantic Commerce And Cultures In Pre-Colonial Western Africa*, ed. Tobias Green and Jose Ligna Nafafé, (OUP, 2012), 91-124
Danby, Niles, *The Fires of Excellence: Spanish and Portuguese Oriental Architecture* (Reading: Garnet, 1997)
Davenport, P., *Medieval Bath Uncovered* (Stroud: Sutton, 2002)
Davis, Cecil T., *The Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire* (1899, 1969 edn., Bath: King's Mead)

Davies, C.S.L., "The Alleged 'Sack of Bristol': International Ramifications of Breton Privateering, 1484-5", *Historical Research*, 67 (1994), 230-39
Davies, R. R., *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (OUP, 1995).
Davies, R. R., *The Age of Conquest: Wales, 1063-1415* (2nd edn., OUP, 2000)
Davies, R. R., "Plague and Revolt", in *The Gwent County History, Volume 2: The Age of the Marcher Lords, c.1070-1536*, ed. R. A. Griffiths, Tony Hopkins and Ray Howell (Cardiff: wales UP/Gwent County History Association, 2008), 217-40
Delano-Smith, Catherine, and Roger J. P. Kain, *English Maps: A History* (London: The British Library, 1999)
Deller, William S., "The First Rite of Passage: Baptism in Medieval Memory", *Journal of Family History*, 36:3 (2011), 3-14
Dermot-Harding, N., "The Archives of the Corporation of Bristol", *TBGAS*, 68 (1926), 227-49
Dimmock, Spencer, "Haverfordwest: an Exemplar for the Study of Southern Welsh Towns in the Later Middle Ages", *Welsh History Review*, 22 (2004), 1-28
Dimmock, Spencer, "Reassessing the Towns of Southern Wales in the Later Middle Ages", *Urban History*, 32 (2005), 33-45
Dimmock, Spencer and Jinx Newly, "Apprentices", in Madge Dresser and Peter Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000-2001* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2007), 36
Dimmock, Spencer, "Social Conflict in Welsh Towns, c.1280-1530", in *Urban Culture in Medieval Wales*, ed. Helen Fulton (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2012), 117-35
Dobson, Barrie, "General Survey, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 273-90
Dodd, G., "A Parliament full of Rats? *Piers Plowman* and the Good Parliament of 1376", *Historical Research*, 79 (2006), 21-49
Douie, Decima I., *Archbishop Pecham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952)
Down, Kevin, "Colonial Society and Economy", in *A New History of Ireland: II Medieval Ireland, 1169-1534*, ed. Art Cosgrove (2nd edn., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 439-91
Doyle, A. I., "The Manuscripts", in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and its Literary Background,* ed. D. Lawton (CUP, 1982), 88-100
Dresser, Madge, and Peter Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000-2001* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2007)
Dresser, Madge, "The Welsh in the Eighteenth Century", in Dresser, Madge, and Peter Fleming, *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000-2001* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2007), 59-72
Driver, J.T., "Parliamentary Burgesses for Bristol and Gloucestershire, 1422-1437", *TBGAS*, 74 (1955), 113-21
Duffy, Eamon, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven & London: Yale UP, 1992)
Dunn, Penelope, "Trade", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. Carole Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (London: Hambledon & London, 2002), 213-34
Dunning, Robert R., "Miles Salley, Bishop of Llandaff", *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, 8 (1991), 1-6
Dyer, Alan, "English Town Chronicles", *Local Historian*, 12 (1976/7)
Dyer, Alan, *Decline and Growth in English Towns, 1400-1640* (Houndmills: Macmillan/Economic History Society, 1991), 12-13
Dyer, Alan, "'Urban Decline' in England, 1377-1525", in *Towns in Decline, AD 100-1600*, ed. T. R. Slater (Aldershot : Ashgate, 2000), 266-88
Dyer, Christopher, "Market Towns and the Countryside in Late Medieval England", *Canadian Journal of History/Annales canadiennes d'histoire*, 31 (1996), 17-35

Dyer, Christopher, "Trade, Towns and the Church: Ecclesiastical Consumers and the Urban Economy of the West Midlands, 1290-1540", in *The Church in the Medieval Town*, ed. T. R. Slater & Gervase Rosser (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 55-75
Dyer, Christopher, *An Age of Transition? Economy and Society in England in the Later Middle Ages* (OUP, 2005)
Dyer, Christopher, "Modern Perspectives on Medieval Welsh Towns", in *Wales and the Welsh in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. A. Griffiths and P. R. Schofield (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2011), 163-79
Edwards, J. G., "The Parliamentary Committee of 1398", *EHR*, 40 (1925), 321-33
Egging-Dinwiddy, Kirsten, with John Chandler, "Temple Back: Excavating Bristol's Industrial History", *TBGAS*, 129 (2011), 79-116
Emden, A. B., *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A. D. 1500,* 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957-9)
Farady, Michael, *Ludlow, 1086-1660: A Social, Economic and Political History* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1991)
Farber, Lianna, *An Anatomy of Trade in Medieval Writing: Value, Consent, and Community* (Cornell UP, 2006)
Faria, T. V. De, & Flávio Miranda, "'Pur Bone Alliance et Amiste Faire': Diplomacia e Comercio entre Portugal e Inglaterra no final da Idade Média", *Cultura, Espaço & Memoria: Revista do Centro de Investigação Transdiciplinar*, 1 (2010), 109-27
Federico, Sylvia, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2003)
A. B. Ferguson, "The Problem of Counsel in *Mum and the Sothsegger", Studies in the Renaissance,* 2 (1955)
Fernández-Armesto, Felipe, *Before Columbus: Exploration and Colonisation from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1229-1492* (Houndmills & London: Macmillan, , 1987)
Fernández-Armisto, Felipe, "Machim, Robert (supp. fl. 14th cent.)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17535 [accessed 06/05/11])
Ferster, Judith, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania UP, 1996)
Fleming, Peter and Kieran Costello, *Discovering Cabot's Bristol: Life in the Medieval and Tudor Town* (Tiverton: Redcliffe Press, 1998)
Fleming, Peter, "Conflict and Urban Government in Later Medieval England: St Augustine's Abbey and Bristol", *Urban History*, 27 (2000), 325-43
Fleming, Peter, "Telling Tales of Oligarchy in the Late Medieval Town", in *The Fifteenth Century, 2: Revolution and Consumption in Late Medieval England*, ed. Michael Hicks (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), 178-93
Fleming, Peter and Michael Wood, *Gloucestershire's Forgotten Battle: Nibley Green, 1470* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003)
Fleming, Peter, "Making History: Culture, Politics, and *The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*", in *Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Douglas L. Biggs, Sharon D. Michalove and A. Compton Reeves (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 289-316
Fleming, Peter, *Bristol Castle: A Political History*, BBHA, 110 (2004)
Fleming, Peter, "Politics and the Provincial Town: Bristol, 1451-1471", in *People, Places and Perspectives: Essays on Later Medieval and Early Tudor England*, ed. Keith Dockray and Peter Fleming (Stroud: Nonsuch, 2005), 79-114
Fleming, Peter, *Bristol and the Wars of the Roses*, BBHA (Bristol, 2005)

Fleming, Peter, "Identity and Belonging: Irish and Welsh in Fifteenth-Century Bristol", in *The Fifteenth Century VII: Conflicts, Consequences and the Crown in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007), 175-193
Fleming, Peter, *Coventry and the Wars of the Roses* (Dugdale Soc./Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Stratford-on-Avon, Dugdale Soc. Occasional Papers, 50, 2011)
Fleming, Peter, 'Ethnic Minorities, 1500-1685', in *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City*, ed. Madge Dresser and Peter Fleming (Chichester: England's Past for Everyone/Phillimore, 2008), 41-2
Fleming, Peter, "Looking out from the Edge of the World: Bristol, Gascony and Iberia in the Later Middle Ages", in *Gentes de mar en la ciudad atlántica medieval*, ed. Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Michel Bochaca & Amélia Aguiar Andrade (Institutio de Estudios Riojanos, Logroño, 2012), 149-66
Fleming, Peter, "Processing Power: Performance, Politics, and Place in Early Tudor Bristol", in *Personalities and Perspectives of Fifteenth-Century England,* ed. A. Compton Reeves (Phoenix, Arizona: The Arizona Center for Medieval Studies, 2012), 141-68
Fleming, Peter, "The Welsh Diaspora in Early Tudor English Towns', in *Urban Culture in Medieval Wales*, ed. Helen Fulton (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2012), 270-93
Fleming, Peter "Crown and Town in Later Medieval England: Bristol and National Politics,1399 to 1486", in *Negotiating the Political in Northern European Urban Society, c.1400-c.1600*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Tempe, Arizona/Turnhout, Belgium: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies/Brepols, 2013), 141-162
Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Eng. Trans., NY: Vintage Books, 1995)
Foyle, Andrew, *Bristol: Pevsner Architectural Guides* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2004)
Frost, Ruth H., "The Urban Elite", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. C. Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (London and New York: Hambledon and London, 2004), 235-53
Fulton, Helen, "The Outside Within: Medieval Chester and North Wales as a Social Space", in *Mapping the Medieval City*, ed. Catherine A. M. Clarke (Wales UP, 2011), 149-68
Furster, Judith, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania UP, 1996)
Gaibrois, M. B., "Juan Caboto en España", *Revistas de Indias*, 16 (1943), 607–27
George, William, "Taylor, John (1829–1893)", rev. Elizabeth Baigent, *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27061 [accessed 21/03/13])
Geouge, J. C., "Anglo-Portuguese Trade during the Reign of João I of Portugal, 1385-1433", in *England and Iberia in the Middle Ages, 12th-15th Century*, ed. M. Bullón-Fernández (New York & Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, , 2007), 119-33
Giancarlo, M., *Parliament and Literature in Late Medieval England* (CUP, 2007)
Gil, Juan, *Mitos y utopias del descubrimiento: I. Colón y su tiempo* (Madrid: Alianza Universidad, 1989), 77-81
Gill, Louise, *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion* (Thrupp: Sutton, 1999)
Given-Wilson, Chris, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004)
Goddard, Richard, "The Built Environment and the Later Medieval Economy: Coventry, 1200-1540", in *Coventry: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in the City and its Vicinity,* ed. Linda Monckton and Richard K. Morris, British Archaeological Association, Conference Transactions, 33 (Leeds: Maney, 2011), 33-47
Goff, Jacques le, *The Birth of Purgatory* (English trans. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1984)

Good, Jonathan, *The Cult of St George in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2009)
Goodman, Anthony, *Margery Kemp and her World* (London: Longman, 2002)
Goose, Nigel and Nesta Evans, "Wills as an Historical Source", in *Till Death do us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, ed. Tom Arkell, Goose and Evans (Oxford: Leopard's Head, 2000), 38-71
Gorny, Danny, "Why so Saracen? Using Villains to Define the Nation in the Thornton Manuscripts", paper given to 1st Global Conference on Villains and Villainy, Mansfield College Oxford, September, 2009 (http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/gornypaper.pdf [accessed 10/03/13])
Grady, F., "The Generation of 1399", in *The Letter of the Law: Legal Practice and Literary Production in Medieval England*, ed. E. Steiner and C. Barrington (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2002), 202-29
Gransden, Antonia, *Historical Writing in England II: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982)
Gray, H. L., "Tables of Enrolled Customs and Subsidy Accounts, 1399-1482", in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. E. Power and M. M. Postan (London: Routledge, 1933), 334-5
Gray, Irvine E., *Antiquaries of Gloucestershire and Bristol* (Bristol: BGAS, 1981)
Green, R. F., "John Balle's Letters: Literary History and Historical Literature", in *Chaucer's England: Literature in Historical Context,* ed. B. Hanawalt (Minnesota: Minnesota UP, 1992), 176-200
Griffiths, R. A., *The Reign of Henry VI* (London: Ernest Benn, 1981)
Griffiths, R. A. & Roger S. Thomas, *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty* (Alan Sutton, Stroud, 1985)
Griffiths, Ralph A., "The English Realm and Dominions and the King's Subjects in the Later Middle Ages", in *Aspects of Late Medieval Government and Society: Essays Presented to J. R. Lander*, ed. J. G. Rowe (Toronto UP, 1986), 83-105, reprinted in his, King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century (London: Hambledon, 1991), 33-54
Griffiths, Ralph A., "Medieval Severnside: the Welsh Connection", in his *Conquerors and Conquered in Medieval Wales* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1994), 1-18
Griffiths, Ralph A., "Wales and the Marches", in *CUHB*, 681-714
Griffiths, Ralph A., "After Glyn Dŵr: an Age of Reconciliation?", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 117 (2002), 139-64
Gross, Anthony, "Langland's Rats: A Moralist's View of Parliament", *Parliamentary History,* 9 (1990), 286-301.
Gross, Anthony, *The Dissolution of the Lancastrian Kingship* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1996)
Guidi-Bruscoli, Francesco, "John Cabot and his Italian Financiers", *Historical Research*, 85 (2012), 372-93
Halbwachs, Maurice, *On Collective Memory*, trans. L. Closer (Chicago UP, 1992)
Hall, William Keith, "A Topography of Time: Historical Narration in John Stow's *Survey of London*", *Studies in Philology*, 88 (1991), 1-15
Hanawalt, Barbara, "'The Childe of Bristowe' and the Making of Middle-Class Adolescence", in *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. Hanawalt and David Wallace (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 1996), 155-78
Hanna, Ralph III, "Sir Thomas Berkeley and his Patronage", *Speculum,* 64 (1989), 878-916

Hanna, Ralph III, *William Langland* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1993)
Hare, John, "Pensford and the Growth of the Cloth Industry in Late Medieval Somerset", *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History*, 147 (2003), 173-80
Hare, John, *A Prospering Society: Wiltshire in the Later Middle Ages* (Hatfield: Hertfordshire UP, 2011)
Harriss, G. L., "Theory and Practice in Royal Taxation: Some Observations", *EHR,* 97 (1982) 811-19
Harrison, W. E. C., "An Early Voyage of Discovery", *Mariner's Mirror*, 16:2 (1930), 198-9
Harte, Jeremy, "Landscape and Legend", in *England's Landscape: The West*; ed. Barry Cunliffe (London: Collins/English Heritage, 2006), 175-88
Harvey, I. M. W., "Was there Popular Politics in Fifteenth-Century England?", in *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society*, ed. R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), 155-74
Harvey, John H., *The Master Builders: Architecture in the Middle Ages* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971)
Harvey, John H., *The Mediaeval Architect* (London: Wayland, 1972)
Harvey, John H., "Political and Cultural Exchanges between England and the Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages", in *Literature, Culture and Society of the Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of Ferran Vallis I Taberner,* vol. 9, ed. M. Martínez López (Barcelona: Promociones Publicaciones Universitarias Barcelona, 1989), 2630-5
Hasted, Edward, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent,* 12 vols. (Canterbury, 1778-99)
Hastings, Margaret, *The Court of Common Pleas in Fifteenth-Century England: A Study of Legal Administration and Procedure* (Ithaca & London: Cornell UP, 1947)
Hatcher, John, "The Great Slump of the Mid-Fifteenth Century", in *Progress and Problems in Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Edward Miller*, ed. R. H. Britnell and J. Hatcher (CUP, 1996), 236-72
Hay, Denis, "History and Historians in England and France during the Fifteenth Century", *BIHR*, 35 (1962), 111-27
Heidegger, Martin, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962)
Heng, Geraldine, "The Romance of England: Richard Coer de Lyon, Saracens, Jews, and the Politics of Race and Nation", in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), 135-71
Herbert, Nicholas, "Medieval Gloucester: Trade and Industry, 1327-1547", in *A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 4: The City of Gloucester*, ed. Herbert (London: University of London Institute of Historical Research, 1988, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/source.aspx?pubid=281 [accessed 15/05/12]), 41-54
Hicks, Michael, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence: George, Duke of Clarence, 1449-78* (revised edn., Bangor: Headstart History, 1992)
Hicks, Michael, *Warwick the Kingmaker* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998)
Hicks, Michael, "Hungerford, Robert, Third Baron Hungerford and Baron Moleyns (c.1423–1464)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14178 [accessed 07/01/13])
Hicks, F. W. P., "St James (Bristol) Fair leases", *TBGAS*, 57 (1935), 145-51
Higgins, David H., "The Roman Town of Abona and the Anglo-Saxon Charters of Stoke Bishop of AD 969 and 984", *Bristol and Avon Archaeology*, 19 (2004), 75-86
Higgins, David, *Saint Jordan of Bristol: From the Catacombs of Rome to College Green at Bristol*, BBHA, 120 (Bristol, 2007)

Higgins, David, "A sculptural tribute to St Jordan of Bristol", *TBGAS*, 127 (2009), 213-32
Hillaby, Joe, "The Bristol Jewry to 1290", in *Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City*, ed. Madge Dresser and Peter Fleming (Chichester: England's Past for Everyone/Phillimore, 2008), 9-18
Hilton, Rodney, *English and French Towns in Feudal Society: A Comparative Study* (CUP, 1992)
Holford, Matthew, "'Testimony (to Some Extent Fictitious)': Proofs of Age in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century", *Historical Research*, 82 (2009), 635-54
Holland, P.W., "The Lincolnshire Rebellion of March 1470", *EHR*, 103 (1988), 854-61
Hooke, Andrew, *A Dissertation on the Antiquity of Bristol* (London: W. Owen, 1748)
Hopkins, Tony, "The Towns", in *The Gwent County History, Volume 2: The Age of the Marcher Lords, c.1070-1536*, ed. R. A. Griffiths, Tony Hopkins and Ray Howell (Cardiff: wales UP/Gwent County History Association, 2008), 115-41
Horobin, Simon, "The Dialect and Authorship of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger", Yearbook of Langland Studies,* 18 (2004), 133-52
Howells, John, "The Boroughs of Medieval Pembrokeshire: Pembroke", in *Pembrokeshire County History, Volume II: Medieval Pembrokeshire*, ed. R. F. Walker (Haverfordwest: Pembrokeshire Historical Society, 2002), 468-76
Hughes, Jonathan, *Arthurian Myths and Alchemy: The Kingship of Edward IV* (Stroud: Sutton, 2002)
Huizinga, J., *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (London: Beacon Press/Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1971)
Hurst, Derek, *Sheep in the Cotswolds: The Medieval Wool Trade* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005)
Ingold, Tim, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000)
Ives, Eric W., *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983)
Ives, Eric W., "Fortescue, Sir John (c.1397–1479)", *ODNB*
(http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9944 [accessed 07/01/13]);
Jackman, Mary R., *The Velvet Glove: Paternalism and Conflict in Gender, Class, and Race Relations* (Berkeley: California UP, 1994)
Jackson, Reg, *Excavations at St James's Priory, Bristol*, Bristol and Region Archaeological Services Monograph (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2006)
Jackson, Reg, "Archaeological Work at 22-25 Queen Square and 42-44 Welsh Back, Bristol, 2002-2006", *Bristol and Avon Archaeology,* 23 (2008-9), 3-12
James, M. K., *Studies in the Medieval Wine Trade*, ed. E. M. Veale (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 112-15
James, T. A., "The Boroughs of Medieval Pembrokeshire: Haverfordwest", in *Pembrokeshire County History, Volume II: Medieval Pembrokeshire*, ed. R. F. Walker (Haverfordwest: Pembrokeshire Historical Society, 2002), 431-60
Jeayes, J. H., "Abbot Newland's Roll of the Abbots of St. Augustine's Abbey, Bristol", *TBGAS*, 14 (1889-90), 117-30
John Stow (1525-1605) and the Making of the English Past: Studies in Early Modern Culture and the History of the Book, ed. Ian Anders Gadd and Alexandra Gillespie (London: British Library, 2004)
Johnson, P. A., *Duke Richard of York, 1411-1460* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988)
Jones, Emrys, The Welsh in London, 1500-2000 (Cardiff: Wales UP, 2001)
Jones, Evan, "The Matthew of Bristol and the Financiers of John Cabot's 1497 Voyage to North America", *EHR*, 121 (2006), 778-95

Jones, Evan, "Alwyn Ruddock: 'John Cabot and the Discovery of America'", *Historical Research*, 81 (2008), 224-54
Jones, Evan, "England's Icelandic Fishery in the Early Modern Period", in *England's Sea Fisheries: The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales since 1300*, ed. D. J. Starkey (London: Chatham Publishing, 2000), 105-10
Jones, Evan, "River Navigation in Medieval England", *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26:1 (2000), 60-82
Jones, Evan, "Illicit business: Accounting for Smuggling in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Bristol", *EcHR*, 2nd series, 54 (2001), 17-38
Jones, Evan, *Inside the Illicit Economy: Reconstructing the Smugglers' Trade of Sixteenth Century Bristol* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012)
Jones, Evan, "Cabot Project", (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/history/research/cabot.html [accessed 20/03/13])
Jones, Evan, "William Weston: Early Explorer of the New World", *Journal of British Studies*, forthcoming
Jones, Michael K., "Beaufort, Henry, Second Duke of Somerset (1436-1464)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1860 [accessed 02/01/13])
Jones, Robert, "Bristol", in *Twenty-Five Years of Archaeology in Gloucestershire: A Review of New Discoveries and New Thinking in Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire and Bristol, 1979-2004*, ed. Neil Holbrook and John Juřica, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Report, 3 (Cirencester: Cotswold Archaeological Trust, 2006), 189-209
Jurkowski, Maureen, C. L. Smith & D. Crook, *Lay Taxes in England and Wales, 1188-1688* (Kew: Public Record Office, 1998)
Justice, S., *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (Berkeley: California UP, 1994)
Kantarowicz, Ernst H., *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (1st edn. 1957, 1997 edn., Princeton UP)
Karlsson, Gunnar, *Iceland's 1100 Years: The History of a Marginal Society* (London: Hurst & Co., 2000)
Kaufman, P. I., "Henry VII and Sanctuary", *Church History*, 53 (1984), 465-76
Kaups, Matti, Douglas R. Macmanis, Brian Birch and John C. Hudson, "Some Observations of Vinland", *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 60:3 (1970), 603-9
Kearney, Richard, *On Stories* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002)
Keene, Derek, "Suburban Growth", in *The Plans and Topography of Medieval Towns in England and Wales*, ed. M. W. Barley (Council for British Archaeology Research Report 14, 1976), reprinted in *The English Medieval Town: A Reader in English Urban History, 1200-1540*, ed. Richard Holt and Gervase Rosser (London: Addison-Wesley Longman Ltd, 1990), 97-119
Keene, Derek, "Changes in London's Economic Hinterland as Indicated by Debt Cases in the Court of Common Pleas", in *Trade, Urban Hinterlands and Market Integration, c. 1300-1600*, ed. James Galloway (London: Centre for Metropollitan History, Institute of Historical Research, 2000), 59-81
Keene, Derek, "Text, Visualisation and Politics: London, 1150-1250", *TRHS,* Sixth Ser., 18 (2008), 69-99
Keen, M. H., *The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto and London, 1965)
Kendrick, T. D., *British Antiquity* (London: Methuen, 1950)
Kerby-Fulton, K. and S. Justice, "Langlandian Reading Circles, 1380-1427", in *New Medieval Literatures*, vol. I, ed. W. Scase, R. Copeland and D. Lawton (OUP, 1997), 59-83

Kermode, Jenny I., "Medieval Indebtedness: The Regions versus London", in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1992 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Nicholas Rogers (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1994), 72-88
Kermode, Jenny I., *Medieval Merchants: York, Beverley and Hull in the Later Middle Ages* (CUP, 1998)
Kightly, Charles, "Hungerford, Walter, First Baron Hungerford (1378–1449)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14181 [accessed 07/01/13])
Jennifer Kermode, "The Greater Towns, 1300-1540", in *CUHB,* 441-65
Kim, Keechang, *Aliens in Medieval Law: The Origins of Modern Citizenship* (CUP, 2000)
Kirby, J. L., "Councils and Councillors of Henry IV, 1399-1413", *TRHS,* 5th series, 14 (1964), 35-65.
Knight, Jeremy, "The Parish Churches", in *The Gwent County History, Volume 2: The Age of the Marcher Lords, c.1070-1536*, ed. R. A. Griffiths, Tony Hopkins and Ray Howell (Cardiff: wales UP/Gwent County History Association, 2008), 167-82
Kowaleski, Maryanne, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (CUP, 1995)
Kowaleski, Maryanne, "Fishing and Fisheries in the Middle Ages", in *England's Sea Fisheries: The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales since 1300*, ed. D. J. Starkey (London: Chatham Publishing, 2000), 19-28
Kowaleski, Maryanne, "Port Towns: England and Wales, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 467-94
Krauel, B., "Events Surrounding Thomas Malliard's Will: An English Merchant in Seville", in *Proceedings of the 2nd Conference of the Spanish Society for English Renaissance Studies*, ed. S. G. Fernández-Corugedo (Oviedo, 1992)
Ladd, Roger A., *Antimercantilism in Late Medieval English Literature* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
Ladurie, Emmanuel Le Roy, *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village 1294-1324* (London: Scholar Press, 1978)
Latham, R. E., *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List* (1994 edn, OUP)
John Latimer, 'Leland in Gloucestershire', *TBGAS*, 14 (1889-90), 221-84
Latimer, John, "The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, its List of Civic Officials Collated with Contemporary Legal MSS", *TBGAS*, 26 (1903), 108-37
Latimer, John, *Sixteenth-Century Bristol* (Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1908)
Laughton, Jane, *Life in a Medieval City: Chester, 1275-1520* (Oxford: Windgather Press, 2008)
Laughton, Jane, "Mapping the Migrants: Welsh, Manx and Irish Settlers in Fifteenth-Century Chester", in *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester, c.1200-1600*, ed. Catherine A. M. Clarke (Wales UP, 2011), 169-83
Lawton, D. A., "Lollardy in the 'Piers Plowman' Tradition", *Modern Language Review*, 76 (1981), 780-93
Lee, James, "Urban Recorders and the Crown in Late Medieval England", in *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 163-77
Lee, James, "'Ye shall disturbe noe mans right': Oath-Taking and Oath-Breaking in Late Medieval and Early Modern Bristol", *Urban History*, 34:1 (2007), 27-38
Lee, James, "Urban Policy and Urban Political Culture: Henry VII and his Towns", *Historical Research*, 82 (2009), 493-510
Leech, Donald, "Stability and Change at the End of the Middle Ages: Coventry, 1450-1525", *Midland History*, 34:1 (2009), 1-21

Leech, Roger, "The Medieval Defences of Bristol", in *"Almost the Richest City": Bristol in the Middle Ages*, ed. L. Keen (London: British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions, XIX, 1997), 18-30
Leech, Roger, "Arthur's Acre: a Saxon Bridgehead at Bristol" *TBGAS*, 127 (2009), 11-20
Lefebvre, Henri, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991)
Leighton, W., "Trinity Hospital, Bristol", *TBGAS,* 36 (1913), 251-87
León, Juan Manuel Bello, "¿Quiénes eran los mercaderes de Sevilla a finales de la Edad Media?", in *Gentes de mar en la ciudad atlántica medieval*, ed. Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Michel Bochaca & Amélia Aguiar Andrade (Institutio de Estudios Riojanos, Logroño, 2012), 249-74
Lewis, Chris, "Framing Medieval Chester: The Landscape of Urban Boundaries", in *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester, c.1200-1600*, ed. Catherine A. M Clarke (Wales UP, 2011), 42-56
Liddy, Christian, "Bristol and the Crown, 1326-31: Local and National Politics in the Early Years of Edward III's Reign', in *Fourteenth-Century England, III*, ed. W.M. Ormrod (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 48-65
Liddy, *Christian, War, Politics and Finance in Late Medieval English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350-1400* (Woodbridge: Boydell/Royal Historical Society, 2005)
Lilley, Keith D., *City and Cosmos: The Medieval World in Urban Form* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009)
Lilley, Keith D., "Urban Mappings: Visualising Late-Medieval Chester in Cartographic and Textual form", in Clarke, Catherine A. M. (ed.), *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester, c.1200-1600* (Wales UP, 2011) 19-41
Lippard, Lucy, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicultural Society* (New York: The New Press, 1997)
Liversidge, M. J. H., *The Bristol High Cross* (BHA, 42, 1978)
Lloyd, J. E., "Madog ab Owain Gwynedd (supp. fl. 1170)", rev. J. Gwynfor Jones, *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17763 [accessed 11/10/12])
Lloyd, T. E., *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (CUP, 1977)
Lloyd, T. H., *Alien Merchants in England in the High Middle Ages* (New York: Harvester, 1982)
Lobel, Mary D. and E. M. Carus-Wilson, *The Atlas of Historic Towns, Two: Bristol* (London and Baltimore: British Atlas of Historic Towns, 1975)
Lukes, Steven, *Power: A Radical View* (2nd edn., Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)
Luxford, Julian M., "The Late Medieval Abbey: Patronage, Buildings and Images", in *Medieval Art, Architecture and History of Bristol Cathedral*, ed. Jon Cannon and Beth Williamson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 216-46
Maddern, Philippa, "Order and Disorder", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. C. Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (London and New York: Hambledon and London, 2004), 189-212
Marcus, G. J., *The Conquest of the North Atlantic* (2007 edn., Woodbridge: Boydell)
Massey, Doreen, "A Global Sense of Place", in *Reading Human Geography*, ed. T. Barnes and D. Gregory (London: Arnold, 1997), 315-23.
Massey, Doreen, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005)
Mathias, Peter, "Wilson, Eleanora Mary Carus- (1897–1977)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30905 [accessed 22/03/13])
McClure, Peter, "Patterns of Migration in the Late Middle Ages: The Evidence of English Place-Name Surnames", *EcHR*, 2nd ser., 32 (1979), 167-82

McCree, Ben R., "Peacemaking and its Limits in Late Medieval Norwich", *EHR,* 109 (1994), 831-66
McFarlane, K. B., "Loans to the Lancastrian Kings: The Problem of Inducement", *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 9 (1947) 51-68, rep. in K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays*, ed. G. L. Harriss (London: Hambledon, 1981), 57-78
McFarlane, K. B., *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity* (London: English Universities Press, 1952)
McFarlane, K. B., "William Worcester: A Preliminary Survey", in *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J. Conway Davies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 196-221, rep. in K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays*, ed. G. L. Harriss (London: Hambledon, 1981), 199-224
McFarlane, K. B., *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972)
McLaren, Mary-Rose, *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002)
McNiven, Peter, *Heresy and Politics in the Reign of Henry IV: The Burning of John Badby* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1987)
McNiven, Peter, "Rebellion, Sedition and the Legend of Richard II's Survival", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library,* 76 (1994), 93-117
Mendyk, Stan, "Early British Chorography", *The Sixteenth-Century Journal*, 17:4 (1986), 459-81
Merry, Mark, "'Specyall Lover and Preferrer of the Polytike and Common Weale': John Smyth and Ideal Citizenship in Fifteenth-Century Bury St Edmunds", in *Negotiating the Political in Northern European Urban Society, c.1400-c.1600*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2013), 17-44
Michel, F., *Histoire du Commerce et de la Navigation á Bordeaux*, 2 vols (Bordeaux, 1867, 1870)
Middleton, A., "The Audience and Public of *Piers Plowman*", in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and its Literary Background,* ed. D. A. Lawton (CUP, 1982), 101-23
Mills, David, "The Chester Mystery Plays: Truth and Tradition", in *Courts, Counties and the Capital in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Diana E. S. Dunn (Stroud: Sutton, 1996), 1-26
Mills, M. H., "The Collectors of Customs", in *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336, Volume II: Fiscal Administration*, ed. W. A. Morris and J. R. Strayer, Medieval Academy of America, 48 (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), 168-81
Miranda, Flávio, "The Portuguese and the Sea: Urban Interaction and Exchange in the Late Middle Ages", *Gentes de mar en la ciudad atlántica medieval*, ed. Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Michel Bochaca & Amélia Aguiar Andrade (Institutio de Estudios Riojanos, Logroño, 2012), 275-92
Miranda, Flávio, "Before the Empire: Portugal and the Atlantic Trade in the Late Middle Ages", *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 5 (2013), 1-17
Moreno-Ollero, A., *Sanlúcar de Barrameda a fines de la edad media* (Cádiz: Diputación de Cádiz, n.d)
Morgan, Philip, "Henry IV and the Shadow of Richard II", in *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century,* ed. R. Archer (Stroud: Sutton, 1995), 1-31
Morgan, T. J. and Prys Morgan, *Welsh Surnames* (Cardiff: Wales UP, 1994)
Morris, T. E., "Welsh Surnames in the Border Counties of Wales", *Y Cymmrodor*, 43 (1932), 93-173
Myers, A. R., "The Household of Queen Elizabeth Woodville", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 50 (1967/8), 207-235

Nagel, Alexander and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010)
Neale, Frances, "William Worcestre: Bristol churches in 1480", in *Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol: Essays in Honour of Elizabeth Ralph, 1911-200,* ed. Joseph H. Bettey (Gloucester: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2001), 28-54
Neale, Matt, "Crime and Maritime Trade in Bristol, 1770-1800", in *A City Built upon the Water: Maritime Bristol, 1750-1900*, ed. Steve Poole (Bristol: Redcliffe/Regional History Centre, 2013), 76-93
Nightingale, Pamela, "Monetary Contraction and Mercantile Credit in Later Medieval England", *EcHR*, new ser., 43:4 (1990), 560-75
Nightingale, Pamela, "Knights and Merchants: Trade, Politics and the Gentry in Late Medieval England", *Past and Present*, 169 (2000), 36-62
Norgate, G. Le G., "Nicholls, James Fawckner (1818–1883)", rev. Elizabeth Baigent, *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20111 [accessed 21/03/13])
Norgate, Kate, *The Minority of Henry the Third* (London: Macmillan, 1912)
Nuttall, Jenni, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature, Language and Politics in Late Medieval England* (CUP, 2007)
Oakes, Catherine, "Romanesque Architecture and Sculpture", in *Bristol Cathedral: History and Architecture*, ed. John Rogan (Stroud: Tempus, 2000), 64-87
Orme, Nicholas, *Education in the West of England, 1066-1548* (Exeter: Exeter UP, 1976)
Orme, Nicholas, "The Guild of Kalendars, Bristol", *TBGAS*, 96 (1978), 32-52
Orme, Nicholas and M. Webster, *The English Hospital, 1070-1570* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1995)
Orme, Nicholas and Jon Cannon, *Westbury-on-Trym: Monastery, Minster and College*, BRS, 62 (2010)
Orme, Nicholas, "Worcestre, William (1415-1480x85)", ODNB,
(http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29967 [accessed 21/03/13])
Ormrod, W. Mark, "The Rebellion of Archbishop Scrope and the Tradition of Opposition to Royal Taxation", in *The Reign of Henry IV: Rebellion and Survival, 1403-1413*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (York: York Medieval Press, 2008), 162-79
Otte, E., *Sevilla y sus mercaderes a fines de la Edad Media* (Sevilla: Fundación el Monte, 1996)
Page, William, *A History of the County of Gloucester* (London: Victoria County History of England, 1907)
Palliser, David, *Tudor York* (OUP, 1980)
Palliser, D. M. (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, vol. 1, 600-1540,*
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)
Palliser, David M. "Introduction", in *CUHB*, 7-11
Palliser, D. M., *Medieval York* (OUP, forthcoming, 2014)
Parry, J. H., *The Age of Reconnaissance: Discovery, Exploration and Settlement, 1450-1650* (1973 edn., London: Cardinal)
Patterson, Robert B., "Robert Fitz Harding of Bristol: Profile of an Early Angevin Burgess-Baron Patrician and his Family's Urban Involvement", *Haskins Society Journal*, 1 (1989), 109-22
Patrick, Chris, "Recent Archaeological Work in Medieval Coventry and Future Possibilities", in *Coventry: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in the City and its Vicinity*, ed. Linda Monckton and Richard K. Morris, British Archaeological Association, Conference Transactions, 33 (Leeds: Maney, 2011), 21-32

Patterson, Robert B., "Robert fitz Harding (d. 1171)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9597, [accessed 19 August 2012])
Penn, Simon, "The Origins of Bristol Migrants in the Early Fourteenth Century: The Surname Evidence', *TBGAS*, 101 (1983), 123-30
Phythian-Adams, Charles, "Ceremony and the Citizen: The Communal Year at Coventry, 1450-1550", in *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700: Essays in Urban History,* eds. Peter Clark and Paul Slack (Toronto UP, 1972), 57-85
Phythian-Adams, Charles, *Desolation of a City: Coventry and the Urban Crisis of the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge UP, 1979)
Piggott, Stuart, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989)
Pink, Sarah, *Doing Sensory Ethnography* (London: Sage, 2009)
Platt, Colin, *Medieval Southampton: The Port and Trading Community, A.D. 1000-1600* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973)
Pollard, A. F., "Yonge, Sir Thomas (c.1405–1477)", rev. Nigel Ramsay, *ODNB,* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30230 [accessed 1/12/2012])
Pollard, Anthony J., *Warwick the Kingmaker: Politics, Power and Fame* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007)
Poole, Steve, "'More like Savages than Men': Foreign Sailors and Knife Crime in Nineteenth-Century Bristol", in *A City Built upon the Water: Maritime Bristol, 1750-1900*, ed. Steve Poole (Bristol: Redcliffe/Regional History Centre, 2013), 155-74
Pountney, W. J., *Old Bristol Potteries, being an Account of the Old Potters and Potteries of Bristol and Brislington, between 1650 and 1850, with some Pages on the Old Chapel of St. Anne, Brislington* (Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1920)
Powell, Edward, *Kingship, Law and Society: Criminal Justice in the Reign of Henry V* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989)
Prestwich, Michael, *Edward I* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1997)
Price, Roger, "An Excavation at Bristol Bridge, Bristol, 1975", *Rescue Archaeology in the Bristol Area: I* (Bristol: City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, 1979), 29-33
Price, Roger and Michael Ponsford, "Excavation at the Town Wall, Bristol, 1974", *Rescue Archaeology in the Bristol Area: I* (Bristol: City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, 1979), 15-27
Price, Roger and Michael Ponsford et al., *St Bartholomew's Hospital, Bristol: The Excavation of a Medieval Hospital, 1976-8*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report, 110 (CBA, York, 1998)
Quinn, David Beers, "The Argument for the English Discovery of America between 1480 and 1494", *Geographical Journal*, 127 (1961), 277-85
Quinn, David Beers, "John Day and Columbus', *Geographical Journal*, 133 (1967), pp. 205-9
Quinn, David Beers, *England and the Discovery of America, 1481-1620* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974)
Quinn, David Beers, "Columbus and the North: England, Iceland, and Ireland", *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 49:2 (1992), 278-97
Quinn, David Beers, "Cabot, John (c.1451–1498)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/66135, [accessed 03/10/12])
Rahtz, P. A., "Excavation by the Town Wall, Baldwin Street, Bristol, 1957", *TBGAS,* 79 (1960), 221-50
Ralph, Elizabeth, *The Government of Bristol, 1373-1973* (Bristol Corporation, Bristol, 1973)

Rawcliffe, Carole, "Introduction", in *Medieval Norwich*, ed. C. Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (London and New York: Hambledon and London, 2004), ix-xxxvii
Renouard, Yves, « Les Relations de Bordeaux et de Bristol », *Revue Historique de Bordeaux et du Département de la Gironde*, 7 (1957), 103-6
Rexroth, Frank, *Deviance and Power in Late Medieval London* (CUP, 2007)
Reynolds, Susan, *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns* (OUP, 1977)
Reynolds, Susan, "Medieval Urban History and the History of Political Thought", *Urban History Yearbook* (1982), 14-23
Reynolds, Susan, "1483: Gloucester and Town Government in the Middle Ages", in *The 1483 Gloucester Charter in History,* ed. N. M. Herbert, R. A. Griffiths, S. Reynolds and P. Clark (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1983), 40-51
Richmond, Colin F., "The Earl of Warwick's Domination of the Channel and the Naval Dimension to the Wars of the Roses", *Southern History*, 18 (1996), 1-19
Rickert, E., "Some English Letters of 1402", *Review of English Studies,* 8 (1932), 257-63
Ricoeur, Paul, *Memory, History and Forgetting*, trans. K. Blamey and D. Pellauer (Chicago UP, 2004)
Rigby, Stephen H., "Urban 'Oligarchy' in Late Medieval England", in *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. John A. F. Thomson (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1988), 62-86
Rigby, Stephen H., *English Society in the Later Middle Ages: Class, Status and Gender* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995
Rigby Stephen H. and Elizabeth Ewan, "Government, Power and Authority 1300-1540", *CUHB*, 291-312
Roper, I. M., "Effigies of Bristol", *TBGAS*, 27 (1904), 51-116
Roskell, J. S., "William Stourton of Stourton: Speaker in the Parliament of 1413", *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society.,* 82 (1961 for 1960), 155-66.
Ross, Charles, *Edward IV* (London: Methuen, 1974)
Rosser, Gervase, *Medieval Westminster, 1200-1540* (OUP, 1989)
Rosser, Gervase, 'Myth, Image and Social Process in the English Medieval Town,' *Urban History,* 23:1 (1996), 5-25
Rosser, Gervase, "Sanctuary and Social Negotiation in Medieval England", in *The Cloister and the World: Essays in Medieval History in Honour of Barbara Harvey*, ed. J. Blair & B. Golding (OUP, 1996), 56-79
Rosser, Gervase, "Urban Culture and the Church, 1300-1540", in *CUHB*, 335-69
Roffey, Julia, "Middle English Lives", in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace (CUP, 1999), 610-34
Rollison, David, *The Local Origins of Modern Society: Gloucestershire, 1500-1800* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992)
Rubin, Miri, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (CUP, 1991)
Ruddock, Alwyn A., "John Day of Bristol and the English Voyages across the Atlantic before 1497", *Geographical Journal*, 132 (1966), 225–33
Russell, James, "The Archaeology of the Parish of Clifton, with a Note on the 833 AD Boundary Survey of Stoke Bishop", *Bristol and Avon Archaeology*, 16 (2000), 73-87
Sacks, David Harriss, *Trade, Society and Politics in Bristol, 1500-1640,* 2 vols. (New York: Garland, 1985)
Sacks, David Harriss, "The Demise of the Martyrs: The Feasts of St Clement and St Katherine in Bristol, 1400-1600", *Social History*, 11 (1986), 141-69

Sacks, David Harriss, *The Widening Gate: Bristol and the Atlantic Economy, 1450-1700* (California UP: 1992)
Saul, Nigel, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981)
Saul, Nigel, *Richard II* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1997)
Saul, Nigel, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (OUP, 2009)
Schofield, John and Geoffrey Stell, "The Built Environment, 1300-1540', in *CUHB,* 371-93
Scofield, Cora L., *The Life and Reign of Edward IV* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1923)
Scott, James C., *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale UP, 1990)
Scott, K. L., *Later Gothic Manuscripts, 1390-1490*, vol. 2 (London: Harvey Miller, 1996)
Seaver, Kirsten A., *The Frozen Echo: Greenland and the Exploration of North America, ca A.D. 1000-1500* (Stanford UP, 1996)
Seaver, Kirsten A., *The Last Vikings: The Epic Story of the Great Norse Voyagers* (London & New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010)
Sharrer, Harvey L., "The Passing of King Arthur to the Island of Brasil in a Fifteenth-Century Spanish Version of the Post-Vulgate Roman du Graal ", *Romania*, 92 (1971), 65-74
Shaw, David Gary, *Creation of a Community: The City of Wells in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993)
Sherborne, James W., *William Canynges*, BBHA, 59 (Bristol, 1985)
Sherborne, James W., *The Port of Bristol in the Middle Ages*, BBHA (3rd edn, 1987)
Simpson, J., *The Oxford English Literary History, Volume 2. 1350-1547: Reform and Cultural Revolution* (OUP, 2002)
Skeeters, Martha, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation, c. 1530-1570* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)
Slater, T. R. and James P. P. Higgins, "What is Urban Decline: Desolation, Decay and Destruction, or an Opportunity?", in *Towns in Decline, AD 100-1600*, ed. T. R. Slater (Aldershot : Ashgate, 2000), 1-22
Smail, Daniel Lord. *Imaginary Cartographies: Possession and Identity in Late Medieval Marseille* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999)
Smith, Brendan, "Late Medieval Ireland and the English Connection: Waterford and Bristol, ca. 1360-1460", *Journal of British Studies*, 50:3 (2011), 546-65
Smith, Michael Q., *St Mary Redcliffe: An Architectural History* (Bristol: Redcliffe, 1995)
Snyder, E. D., "The Wild Irish: A Study of some English Satires against the Irish, Scots, and Welsh", *Modern Philology*, 17 (1920), 147-85
Soden, Iain, *Coventry: The Hidden History* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005)
Soden, Iain, "An Introduction to the Archaeology of Medieval Coventry", in *Coventry: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in the City and its Vicinity*, ed. Linda Monckton and Richard K. Morris, British Archaeological Association, Conference Transactions, 33 (Leeds: Maney, 2011), 1-20
Somerville, R., *History of the Duchy of Lancaster. Vol. I, 1265-1603* (London: 1953)
Steel, Anthony, *The Receipt of the Exchequer, 1377-1485* (CUP, 1954)
Steel, Anthony, "The Collectors of the Customs at Newcastle upon Tyne in the Reign of Richard II", in *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J. Conway Davies (OUP, 1957), 390-413

Steel, Anthony, "The Collectors of the Customs in the Reign of Richard II", in *British Government and Administration: Studies Presented to S. B. Chrimes*, ed. H. Hearder and H. R. Loyn (Cardiff: Wales UP, 1974), 27-39
Steiner, E., *Documentary Culture and the Making of Medieval English Literature* (CUP, 2003)
Stephens, Walter, *Giants in Those Days: Folklore, Ancient History, and Nationalism* (Lincoln and London: Nebraska UP, 1989)
Storey, Robin L., *The End of the House of Lancaster* (2nd edn, Stroud: Sutton, 1999)
Stoyle, Mark, *Circled with Stone: Exeter's City Walls, 1485-1660* (Exeter: Exeter UP, 2003)
Strohm, Paul, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation, 1399-1422* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1998)
Strohm, Paul, "Three London Itineraries: Aesthetic Purity and the Composing Process", in his *Theory and the Premodern Text* (Minnesota UP, 2000), 3-19
Sutton, Anne F. and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books: Ideals and Reality in the Life and Library of a Medieval Prince* (Stroud: Sutton, 1997)
Sutton, Anne F., "Whittington, Richard (c.1350–1423)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29330 [accessed 13/11/12])
Sweet, Rosemary, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997)
Sweetinburgh, Sheila, *The Role of the Hospital in Medieval England: Gift-Giving and the Spiritual Economy* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004)
Tait, James, *The Medieval English Borough: Studies on its Origins and Constitutional History* (Manchester UP, 1936)
Taylor, C. S., "The Parochial Boundaries of Bristol", *TBGAS,* 33 (1910), 126-39
Taylor, John, "The French Prose *Brut:* Popular History in Fourteenth-Century England", in *England in the Fourteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), 247-54
Telechea, J. A. Solórzano, "Medieval Seaports of the Atlantic Coast of Spain", *International Journal of Maritime History*, 21:1 (2009), 81-100
Thompson, Edward P., *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1980)
Thomson, David, "Leylond, John (d. 1428)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16415 [accessed 10/09/12])
Thomson, John A. F., *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (OUP, 1965)
Thompson, John A. F., "The Courtenay Family in the Yorkist period", *BIHR*, 45 (1972), 234-8
Thomson, John A. F., "Oldcastle, John, Baron Cobham (d. 1417)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20674 [accessed 1/01/13])
Thór, Jón Th., "Why was Greenland 'lost'? Changes in North Atlantic Fisheries and Maritime Trade in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries", *Scandinavian Economic History Review,* 48:1 (2000), 28-39
Thornley, Isobel D., "The Destruction of Sanctuary", in *Tudor Studies Presented ... to A. F. Pollard* ed. R. W. Seton-Watson (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1924), 182-207
Thrupp, Sylvia, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (Chicago UP, 1948)
Thrupp, Sylvia, "A Survey of the Alien Population of England in 1440", *Speculum*, 32 (1957), 262-73
Tittler, Robert, "Reformation, Civic Culture and Collective Memory in English Provincial Towns", *Urban History*, 24 (1997), 281-302

Tittler, Robert, *The Reformation and the Towns in England: Politics and Political Culture, c.1540-1640* (OUP, 1998)
Tittler, Robert, *Townspeople and Nation: English Urban Experience, 1540-1640* (Stanford UP, 2001)
Tomasch, Sylvia, "Postcolonial Chaucer and the Virtual Jew", in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), 243-60
Varela, C., *Ingleses en España y Portugal, 1480-1515: Aristocratas, Mercaderes e Impostores* (Lisboa: Edições Colibri Historia, 1998), 23-37
Vale, Malcolm, *English Gascony, 1399-1453: A Study of War, Government and Politics During the Later Stages of the Hundred Years' War* (OUP, 1970)
Vale, Malcolm, "Aristocratic Violence: Trial by Battle in the Later Middle Ages", in *Violence in Medieval Society*, ed. R. W. Kaeuper (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), 159-82
Verey, David, and Alan Brooks, *Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean. The Buildings of England* (3rd edn, New Haven & London: Yale UP, 2002)
Vigneras, L. A., "The Cape Breton Landfall: 1494 or 1497; Note on a Letter from John Day", *Canadian Historical Review*, 38 (1957), 219–28
Walker, David, *Bristol in the Early Middle Ages*, BHA, 28 (1971)
Walker, R. F., "The Boroughs of Medieval Pembrokeshire: Tenby", in *Pembrokeshire County History, Volume II: Medieval Pembrokeshire*, ed. R. F. Walker (Haverfordwest: Pembrokeshire Historical Society, 2002), 479-503
Walker, Simon K., "Rumour, Sedition, and Popular Protest in the Reign of Henry IV", *Past and Present,* 166 (2000), 31-65
Waterford Treasures: A Guide to the Historical and Archaeological Treasures of Waterford City, ed. Eamonn McEneaney and Rosemary Ryan (Waterford: Waterford Museum of Treasures, 2004)
Watson, W. C., *Portuguese Architecture* (London: Archibald Constable, 1908)
Watt, J. A., "Approaches to the History of Fourteenth-Century Ireland", in *A New History of Ireland: II Medieval Ireland, 1169-1534*, ed. Art Cosgrove (2nd edn., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 303-13
Watt, J. A., "The Anglo-Irish Colony under Strain, 1327-99", in *A New History of Ireland: II Medieval Ireland, 1169-1534*, ed. Art Cosgrove (2nd edn., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 352-96
Watts, John, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (CUP, 1996)
Watts, John, "Butler, James, First Earl of Wiltshire and Fifth Earl of Ormond (1420-1461)", *ODNB* (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4188 [accessed 02/01/13])
Watts, Lorna and Philip Rahtz, *Mary-le-Port, Bristol: Excavations, 1962/3* (Bristol: City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, 1985)
Wedgwood, Josiah C. and A. D. Holt, *The History of Parliament: Biographies of the Members of the Commons House, 1439-1509* (London: HMSO, 1936)
Wells-Furby, Bridget, *The Berkeley Estate, 1281-1417: Its Economy and Development* (Bristol: Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2012)
Westropp, T. J., "Brasil and the Legendary Islands of the North Atlantic: Their History and Fable. A Contribution to the 'Atlantis' Problem", *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 30 (Dublin, 1912–13), 223-60
White, A. B., *Self-Government at the King's Command: A Study in the Beginnings of English Democracy* (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1933)
Whyte, Ian D., *Migration and Society in Britain, 1550-1830* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000)

Williams, A. F., "Bristol Port Plans and Improvement Schemes", *TBGAS*, 81 (1962), 138-88
Williams, Bruce, *Excavations in the Medieval Suburb of Redcliffe, Bristol, 1*980 (Bristol: City of Bristol Museum and Art gallery/Bristol Threatened History Society, 1981)
Williams, Bruce, "The Excavation of Medieval and Post-Medieval Tenements at 94-102 Temple Street, Bristol, 1975", *TBGAS*, 106 (1988), 107-68
Williams, D. Elwyn, "A Short Enquiry into the Surnames in Glamorgan from the Thirteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries", *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1961-2), 45-87
Williams, Edith E., *The Chantries of William Canynges in St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol* (Bristol: William George's Sons, 1950),
Williams, Mary E., *Civic Treasures of Bristol* (City of Bristol, 1984)
Wilson, Christopher, "Gothic Metamorphosed: The Choir of St Augustine's Abbey in Bristol and the Renewal of European Architecture around 1300", in *The Medieval Art, Architecture and History of Bristol Cathedral: An Enigma Explored,* ed. Jon Cannon and Beth Williamson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 69-147
Wood, Robert A., "A 14th-Century London Owner of *Piers Plowman*", *Medium Aevum,* 53 (1984), 83-90
Woodger, L. S., 'Banbury, John II (d.1404/5), of Limerick, Ire. and Bristol', in *HPHC, 1386-1421* (http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/banbury-john [accessed 03/12/12]).
Woodgar, L. S., "William (formerly Spaynell), alias William Markes, Mark (d.c. 1434), of Bristol", in *HPHC*, *1386-1421* (http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/william-mark-alias-william-markes-1434 [accessed 03/12/12])
Woolgar, L. S., "Young, Thomas III (d.1427), of Bristol" in *HPHC, 1386-1421*, (http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/young-thomas-iii-1427 [accessed 03/12/12])
Wright, E., "Henry IV, the Commons and the Recovery of Royal Finance in 1407", in *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England*, ed. Rowena E. Archer and Simon Walker (London and Rio Grande: Hambledon, 1995), 65-81
Wright, *Nicholas, Knights and Peasants: The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998)
Wrigley, E. A. and R. Schofield, *The Population History of England and Wales 1541-1871* (CUP, 1981)
Wylie, J. H., *History of England under Henry the Fourth,* 4 vols. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1884-98)
Yarbrough, Ann, "The Geographical and Social Origin of Bristol Apprentices, 1542-1565", *TBGAS*, 98 (1980), 113-130
Þorláksson, Helgi, "Útflutningur Íslenskra barna til Englands á miðöldum", *Sagnir*, 4 (1983), 47-53
Þorsteinsson, Björn, "Sendiferðir og hirðórn Hannesar Pálssonar og skýrsla hans 1425", *Skírnir*, 127 (1953), 136-64
Þorsteinsson, Björn, *Enska Öldin í Sögu Íslendinga* (Reykjavik, 1970)

Unpublished Theses

Barr, Helen, "A Study of *Mum and the Sothsegger* in its Political and Literary Contexts" (University of Oxford D.Phil., 2 vols., 1989)

Beetham Fisher, Anita Loy, "The Merchants of Medieval Bristol, 1350-1500" (University of Oregon Ph.D., 1987)
Bowly, Tim, "The Land Divides, the Sea Unites: The Communities of Bristol and its Hinterland and their Relationships with Ireland and South Wales in the Long Fifteenth Century" (University of the West of England, Bristol, Ph.D., 2013)
Harvey, Bridget, "The Berkeleys of Berkeley, 1281-1417: A Study in the Lesser Peerage of Late Medieval England" (University of St Andrew's, Ph.D.,1990)
Hicks, Michael, "The Career of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, 1449-1478" (University of Oxford D.Phil., 1975)
Holt, R. A., "Gloucester: an English Provincial Town during the Later Middle Ages' (University of Birmingham Ph.D., 1987)
James Lee, "Political Communication in Early Tudor England: The Bristol Elite, the Urban Community and the Crown, c.1471-c.1553" (University of the West of England, Bristol, Ph.D., 2006)
Monckton, Linda, "Late Gothic Architecture in South West England: Four Major Centres of Building Activity at Wells, Bristol, Sherbourne and Bath" (University of Warwick Ph.D., 1999)
Peacock, Annabel, "The Men of Bristol and the Atlantic Discovery Voyages of the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries" (University of Bristol M.A., 2007) (available on http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/Sources/2007peacock.pdf [accessed 25/05/12])
Penn, Simon, "Social and Economic Aspects of Fourteenth-Century Bristol" (University of Birmingham Ph.D., 1987)
Ponsford, Michael, "Bristol Castle: Archaeology and the History of a Royal Fortress" (University of Bristol M.Litt., 1979)
Reeves, Rosemary, "Social Networks of Fifteenth-Century Somerset Gentry" (University of the West of England, Bristol, M.Phil., 2012)
Sheail, J., "The Regional Distribution of Wealth … in the Lay Subsidy Returns (1524-5)" (University of London, Ph.D., 1968)

Websites

The History of Parliament Trust:
http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/
Know Your Place: http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace/
McIntosh A. et al., *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English*:
http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/elalme/elalme.html
Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: http://www.oxforddnb.com/
The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, ed. Chris Given-Wilson et al. (Scholarly Digital Editions/TNA/The History of Parliament Trust/Boydell and Brewer):
http://www.sd-editions.com/PROME/home.html
Southampton Brokage Books Project (University of Winchester):
http://www.winchester.ac.uk/academicdepartments/history/research/overland/Pages/OverlandTradeProject.aspx
TNA, Gascon Rolls Project:
http://www.gasconrolls.org/edition/calendars/c61_33/document.html
University of Houston O'Quinn Law Center Project on the Anglo-American Legal Tradition:
http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT.html